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GALATIANS AND ROMANS

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THE WESTMINSTER NEW TESTAMENT

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GALATIANS AND ROMANS

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

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PREFACE BY THE GENERAL EDITOR

Having carefully selected the editors of the ten volumes of which the Westminster New Testament will consist, and having fully explained to them the purpose of the series, the General Editor is leaving them the greatest possible liberty; and the editor of each volume is alone responsible for the opinions expressed in it. It is hoped that thus any lack of uniformity will be amply compensated for by the varied interest which the free expression of his own individuality by each editor will impart to the series. While the standpoint adopted is that of modern critical scholarship, only the generally accepted results, and not the vagaries of individual critics, are being presented, and in such a fashion as to avoid unnecessarily giving any offence or causing any difficulty to the reverent Bible student. As the series is intended especially for teachers, lay preachers, and others engaged in Christian work, their needs are being kept particularly in view, and the Commentary aims at being as practically useful as possible. A new arrangement in printing the text and the notes has been adopted, which it is believed will be found an improvement.

A. E. GARVIE.

New College, London,
1912.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Editor of this volume regrets that, owing to illness and other causes, he has not been able to complete his work in the time assigned, and there has consequently been a much longer interval between this and the previous volume than was ever intended.

W. D. M.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 1

COMMENTARY—

Galatians 50

Romans 141

INDEX 381

THE
WESTMINSTER NEW TESTAMENT

INTRODUCTION.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

AUTHENTICITY.

This is one of the four epistles which are accepted with practically universal consent as written by the Apostle Paul. The grounds for this are to be found both in the external testimony of authors in the early Church and in the nature of the epistle itself. The internal evidence is peculiarly powerful and decisive. Nothing more characteristic can be found in literature than this book. Impetuous and passionate, vivid and personal, it evidently deals with a definite situation and not with one imagined or invented in after times. All feel the extreme difficulty of supposing that any later writer could invent a work written in this style, which in certain characteristics differs so much from the other epistles of St. Paul. It is practically impossible to conceive of a man, even one generation later, when

the spread of Christianity into Europe and the fall of Jerusalem had changed the spirit and consciousness of the Church so profoundly, framing the particular problem which is here discussed in its peculiar phases. We have here the atmosphere of a definite and agonising situation, which is brought home to us with language of singular poignancy. Even the difficulty which we shall later consider, of relating this work with the Acts of the Apostles, indicates that it was written at a time previous to that work, or else by some one who lived so far apart from the history described in the Acts that he could not be conscious of the difficulties of interpretation in which his invented work would immediately be involved.

Moreover, if what we shall later discuss as the South Galatian hypothesis is accepted, the authenticity of this epistle is made surer than ever. For in that case it reflects, as Sir William Ramsay has abundantly shown, circumstances in the life of the Galatian churches peculiar to a period which no author of a later date could have known, and which have only been recovered by modern methods of historical investigation. The history of Asia Minor passed through so many and such important changes in the latter half of the first century after Christ, that a later writer, according to the standards of historical method in those days, would have betrayed his ignorance over and over again regarding the period in which he professed to place this letter.

THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA.

The epistle is addressed "to the churches of Galatia" (i. 2), and the personal references contained

in it prove that the Apostle Paul had been the founder of these churches, had entered into relations of very deep affection and intimacy with them. He had begun work among them at a time when he was suffering from some physical affliction, but they had come under the power of the gospel as he preached it in spite of such a serious limitation. The membership of these churches included both Jews and Gentiles who had all, as the Apostle supposed, finally forsaken their past modes of worship and had accepted in its very essence the gospel of faith in Christ which he had preached to them. Since he had been with them, certain persons had appeared in their midst who sought with the utmost ingenuity and energy to destroy their confidence in him, and to win them away from the faith into whose liberty they had entered, by inducing them to become circumcised and undertake some form of responsibility to the law of Moses.

1. **Where was Galatia?**—There has been much controversy in recent days regarding the question as to the exact region in which the churches were situated to whom the Apostle sent this epistle. A slight sketch of the history of Galatia is necessary to understand this controversy.

Galatia was at first the name given to a district in the northern part of Asia Minor which had become occupied from the middle of the third century before Christ by a small group of Gallic tribes belonging to the great Celtic race, for Galatæ and Keltai (or Celts) are one and the same word. They occupied the region in north central Asia Minor, which is watered by the rivers Sangarion and Halys. As this region is more sparsely populated than those further west and

south, they settled down as victorious invaders. Like the Normans who conquered the Saxons in England, they became the dominant power in the country, retaining for many generations not only their original characteristics and even their language, but imposing some of their customs of government and social life upon the masses of the people. Gradually and necessarily they melted into the general population, and the whole of that region became known as "Galatia." In B.C. 189 the Roman Empire, having now entered that part of the world, overcame the Galatians and captured the city of Ancyra. But the natural energies of such a race as the Galatians are hard to restrain. Movement and expansion persisted, so that about the year B.C. 160 the territory known as Galatia had not only extended westward and north-eastward, but also southward, and large portions of the country of Phrygia and Lycaonia were wrested from their original owners. Thus they obtained control, not without Roman sanction, of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe from Lycaonia, as well as Antioch "in Pisidia" from Phrygia. In the beginning of the first century before Christ the Galatians came completely under the Roman imperial system, and were at last delivered from the continuous warfare which had been carried on by their Asiatic enemies. Under the imperial rule, from about B.C. 44 onwards, one king ruled over what had now become a vast realm. Thereafter, and until the year A.D. 72, an extraordinary number of changes in the boundaries of Galatia took place. It was made a Roman province by Augustus in A.D. 25. Throughout that long period it continued to be a centre of power in the development of

Roman authority and policy as the empire spread eastwards, not only conquering but Romanizing the territories which it conquered. "The great work," says Lightfoot, "of the Roman conquest was the fusion of the dominant with the conquered races, a result chiefly, it would appear, of that natural process by which all minor distinctions are levelled in the presence of a superior power."

2. **Two Rival Theories.**—For long the majority of scholars took it for granted that the Epistle to the Galatians was addressed to churches supposed to have been founded by the Apostle Paul in the cities of Pessinum, Ancyra, and Tavium, etc., in the Northern Galatia, or Galatia proper. This opinion had always been felt to carry much difficulty with it, and hence some prominent scholars have always been found to urge that the epistle must have been addressed to the churches which Paul established in what has come to be called "South Galatia," according to the story told in Acts xiii. and xiv. In that case Paul called them churches of Galatia, because they were in the Roman province of that name. The dispute has in our day become crystallized under the two phrases "The Northern Galatian Theory" and "The South Galatian Theory."

It is best to recount briefly the reasons advanced by those who support the former. (*a*) It would be natural for those who had travelled through those regions, as perhaps Luke, the author of the Acts, and certainly Paul had done, to use the popular rather than the official names for the districts which they visited. Especially would it seem on the surface to be appropriate that a letter should be directed to churches under the name

which they bore locally, and by which they would habitually describe themselves. (*b*) In the Acts of the Apostles we find reference to various districts of Asia Minor which seem to be made without any regard to their political standing in the Roman Empire, but solely to their traditional, geographical titles. Thus Luke tells of the Apostle's visit to Mysia, Phrygia, Lycaonia, none of which were provinces. Moreover, some of these are referred to in passages where the word "Galatia" is also used (xvi. 6–8, xviii. 23). Yet again, in the Acts the cities of Lystra and Derbe are ascribed to Lycaonia, and Antioch to Pisidia, which to some writers seems a convincing proof that they were not described as Galatian towns in the ordinary speech of the day. (*c*) The expression in Act xvi. 6, "Phrygia and the region of Galatia" (A.V.), is said by these scholars to refer to "some region which might be said to belong either to Phrygia or Galatia, or parts of each contiguous to the other."

In comparatively recent days a flood of light has been thrown by the investigations of certain scholars, at the head of whom is Sir William Ramsay, into the history and geography of Asia Minor. The history of that region under the Roman Empire is now more thoroughly known than it ever has been, and innumerable minute facts have been gathered which have caused readjustment of many conceptions which had become traditional among scholars regarding the history alike of State and Church during the first centuries of the Christian era. The consensus of opinion has been growing stronger with each stage of the discussion in favour of the conclusion that

the Epistle to the Galatians was addressed to the churches in South Galatia. Some of the more prominent reasons in support of this view must be now given as briefly as possible.

(1) In the Acts of the Apostles we have no room for a journey to North Galatia. If such a journey was made, it could only afford a very brief time for the laborious work of establishing a group of churches such as are addressed in this epistle. On this matter the crucial passages are: Acts xvi. 6, xviii. 23. In the former we have the phrase "Phrygia and the region of Galatia" (A.V.), which ought to be translated "They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia" (R.V.). Now if this be the exact translation, it seems inevitable that we should agree with Sir William Ramsay that this must refer to a portion of country which was still known as Phrygia, but had in recent times been incorporated into the Roman Province of Galatia. It seems unnatural that Luke should refer here to Northern Galatia as a country which long ago had been Phrygia, but had become Galatia—an unlikely historical reference in such a work as the Acts of the Apostles.

Another difficulty arises in connection with this verse from its use of a peculiar Greek idiom. The verse reads as follows: "And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, *having been forbidden* of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in Asia." This did not mean, as the English translation suggests, either that the visit to Phrygia and Galatia was subsequent to the monition of the Holy Ghost (as the North Galatian theory maintains), or that after the monition Paul and his company turned back to Derbe and Lystra (as

the South Galatian theory would require); but the Greek idiom allows us (as in Acts xxv. 13) to treat the participial clause as referring to the time subsequent, and not antecedent, to that of the principal clause. In this passage the accurate English translation would be "and were forbidden to speak the word in Asia," which would show that, having started out from the "region of Phrygia and Galatia," and having been intercepted by a Divine monition on their way to Asia, the Apostle and his companions diverged and went towards Mysia.

In Acts xviii. 23 (A.V.) we read that he "went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order." The correct translation is (R.V.) "went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order." As in the former case, the historian here refers to a region which at the very time of his writing was known popularly in one way as Phrygia and in the other as Galatia. If this interpretation of the two passages be correct, then in neither case is there any reference to North Galatia; and if that be established, then it remains true that we have no reference in the Book of Acts to any work of Paul in that country, and indeed no room for such prolonged labours as must be implied in founding churches there.

(2) A special set of considerations in this matter arises from what we know of the Apostle's attitude toward the Roman Empire. He was not only proud of being a Roman citizen, but appealed on various occasions to the privileges involved in that fact (Acts xvi. 37 ff., xxii. 25 ff.). He seems to have habitually recognized the Roman authority and system in his plans as a missionary, and even in his mode of addressing or speaking of the various

churches which he founded. Thus he describes the Philippians and Thessalonians as those of "Macedonia" because they belonged to that province, even though their more definite geographical designation would have been "Thracians." So does he use the names "Asia" and "Achaia" with careful attention to the imperial authority which had created those provinces, and to the dignity which its regulations carried with them in the estimate of the whole world. So with regard to the churches whom the Apostle addresses in this epistle. It is to be admitted that he would have used the word "Galatians" if he had been addressing the churches in the region originally called "Galatia." But on the supposition that he addressed a letter to the group of churches whose foundation is described in Acts xiii. 14, it is to be observed that he could have used only the same designation. For (*a*) there was no other single title by which he could include them all, other than that of the Roman province to which they belonged; and (*b*) if he had chosen to address them through their local designations as Phrygians and Lycaonians, he would have been guilty of a failure in courtesy, as in that case he would have deliberately chosen titles which carried with them the feeling of inferiority, in preference to that, embracing them all, which recognized their standing in relation to the empire. Especially would this lapse in courtesy have been the more noticeable because he himself was a Roman citizen. An illustration of this whole matter is to be found in the opening words of 1 Peter, where we find a letter addressed to certain persons in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. At the time when

this epistle was probably written all these were names of Roman provinces, and Galatia is one of them.

(3) Various facts arise from a study of the epistle itself, which, in his *Historical Commentary on Galatians*, Sir William Ramsay above all others has set forth. Even if many of his suggestions seem more ingenious than probable, the mass of evidence which he presents is impressive in the extreme, and the undoubted facts which he describes confirm the theory that the letter was addressed to the inhabitants of the cities of South Galatia. (*a*) We must recognize the fact that in these churches the Jewish element was both numerous and powerful, while it is hard to find conclusive evidence of their presence in large numbers in North Galatia. (*b*) "The truth is," says Sir William Ramsay, "that though North Galatia had a peculiar and strongly marked character, not the slightest reference to its special character can be found in this epistle." (*c*) On the other hand, there are many points in the Epistle to the Galatians which seem peculiarly applicable to the known conditions and practices of the cities of South Galatia. The allusion to their former religious beliefs and ceremonies, to their lack of quick intellectual powers, to their easy submission to the sway of forceful personalities, would be true to the Phrygian nature rather than to the fiery, active, and independent Celts. Further, two allusions to legal practices (iii. 7–18) would imply that the people were familiar with the Greek law. This is much more likely to have been the case in the southern cities, where Greek civilization was far more potent, than in the more sparsely populated and ruder regions of the north.

3. **Paul's Visits to Galatia.**—The Acts of the

Apostles describes three visits which Paul paid to the Province of Galatia. The first of these occurred on his first missionary journey, whose course is described so elaborately in Acts, chaps. xiii. and xiv. Having parted in some unfortunate manner with John Mark at Perga in Pamphylia, the missionaries travelled up the steep mountain roads to the high lands of Southern Galatia. Some think that this involved a change in their plans, and that Paul may have resolved to go in this direction so as to escape the unhealthy coast region. Sir William Ramsay has given at great length powerful reasons for thinking that the "thorn" or "stake in the flesh," to which Paul alludes in 2 Cor. xii. 7, may have resulted from a severe attack of the distressing and even humiliating disease known as malarial fever. In this case he probably was still suffering from relapses of this dread foe, as he moved among the Galatian cities and wondered at the generous manner in which they received him (Gal. iv. 13, 14). "The infirmity of the flesh" which he adduces in that passage as the cause of his having come among them and preached to them, and which he says might have tempted them to despise him, must have been a temporary affliction. It does not seem to have interfered with his work or threatened his influence at any other period of his career, and was therefore most probably not a chronic form of suffering or deformity. It may well be, therefore, that in going up into Galatia from Perga he was seeking relief in a healthier climate from this weakening and often extremely painful disease.

The details of their visits to the cities of Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe may be read in Acts, and must be passed over for lack of space.

The second visit of the Apostle to this region is described more briefly in Acts xv. 40–xvi. 5. This time he went by land, confirming the churches in Syria and Cilicia on the way. We know nothing of the origin of the Christian movement in these regions, except what we may surmise from the fact that Paul went thither after his flight from Jerusalem, and that he was probably active there when Barnabas found him and brought him to Antioch (Acts ix. 30, xi. 25; Gal. i. 21). On this journey he naturally came to Derbe first and went through the cities delivering the decrees issued by the council at Jerusalem (Acts xv.). Luke tells us briefly of the prosperity which came upon the churches: "so the churches were strengthened in their faith and increased in number daily" (Acts xvi. 5).

The third visit is described very briefly in Acts xviii. 23. Paul had entered upon a journey, starting from Antioch in Syria (ver. 22), and was apparently determined to reach Ephesus (Acts xix. 1). This would necessarily take him through "the region of Galatia and Phrygia," for the main high road from the East to Ephesus could not have taken him to Northern Galatia. We may conclude, therefore, that he did not pass by the churches described on those previous journeys, but made it his chief endeavour to take them "in order, establishing all the disciples."

Once more we hear of these churches, when two of their leaders, Gaius of Derbe and Timothy of Lystra (Acts xvi. 1, 2), were found among the band which gathered round the Apostle at Troas on his last journey to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 4). And yet again we have a glimpse of his continued relations and close intercourse with these much-loved

churches, in connection with the great collection for the poor at Jerusalem, to which, even after the fierce controversy and trouble which Jewish Christians had caused, he induced the Galatian churches to contribute (1 Cor. xvi. 1).

THE DATE OF THE EPISTLE.

It is not too much to say that the date of the Epistle to the Galatians is one of the most interesting and important subjects of discussion in the field of New Testament literature in these days. We shall best understand the matter if we take first the position of those who hold that the Epistles to the Galatians and the Romans were written about the same time, and probably from the same place, and then describe the reasons which an increasing number of scholars give for making Galatians one of the earliest of Paul's writings, if not even the earliest.

1. Those who hold that this epistle was written at a late date insist that it belongs to the same period as 1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans. The reasons for this are the following: (1) The Epistle to the Romans, as we have it before us, was most probably sent from Corinth just before the Apostle set out on his last visit to Jerusalem (Rom. xv. 22 ff.). This seems to be one of the most certain points in the study of New Testament literary history. (2) Further, the Epistle to the Romans shows that the Apostle at the time of its writing was absorbed in the defence and exposition of what he called "his gospel"—the gospel, that is, as it had been given to him; and it is this very work of defending the great principle of

justification by faith, which is his gospel, that gave rise to the passionate argument of the Epistle to the Galatians. (3) There is not only a striking similarity between many of the subjects and the general mode of exposition in Romans and Galatians, but the similarity extends even to the use in both epistles of many most striking phrases and unusual words (for parallels see Lightfoot and Adeney on *Galatians*). (4) In his letters to the Corinthian churches the Apostle Paul is shown to be immersed in the same controversy regarding the fundamental doctrines of the gospel and his own apostolic authority. Especially is it felt by many that the last part of 2 Corinthians, in which the Apostle rises to a white heat of indignation, reveals a situation and expresses a mood similar to those which gave rise to Galatians. (5) It is further urged that if we put the Epistle to the Galatians in a much earlier period than that suggested above, we bring it into proximity to the Thessalonian letters—letters characterized by a spirit so friendly and simple and quiet in tone as to indicate that the Apostle was living in another psychological atmosphere, incongruous with that out of which the letter to Galatia was sent.

This argument involves that Galatians was written either at Ephesus in close association with 1 Corinthians, or after 2 Corinthians, which was written in Macedonia, at Corinth. This is the opinion most commonly held and would make it necessary to date it about the end of A.D. 57 or early in A.D. 58.

2. It has been already stated that in recent days a number of careful scholars have found reasons to dispute the positions just described.

Prof. Benjamin W. Bacon, in his remarkably clear discussion of this whole subject (*Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*, the MacMillan Co., New York), has given good reasons for the position that a considerable time may have elapsed between the writing of Galatians and Romans. He would not on general principles be averse even to admitting that the Thessalonian correspondence followed the letter to the Galatians. He points out that, in spite of the similarity between Galatians and Romans, there are also very great dissimilarities. The one is written to churches with which the Apostle is familiar, the other to a body of Christians whom he had never visited. In the one the very power of the argument as an intellectual feat is heightened by the evidences of profound emotion which make the logic leap with life. The other is calm, on the whole deliberate and even tender, towards Jewish Christians. Dr. Bacon concludes that the aim which Paul has in Romans of "setting forth the nature and grounds of his gospel" would lead him to revert once and again to the line of argument pursued against the Judaizers in Galatia. The present writer is pursuaded that this is the right line to take in studying the relations of the two epistles, but that Dr. Bacon does not carry it far enough. For when he speaks of simply reverting to the line of argument in the earlier epistle, he does not carry out to its real issue the principle which he has enunciated in the same paragraph, namely, that "the same writer on similar occasions will always tend to repeat himself. If the subject-matter be something which his very occupation compels him to constantly reiterate, he will repeat

even whole phrases in identical, or very closely similar, language" (pp. 27, 28). The principle here adduced will carry one much further than the assertion that the Apostle would revert in Romans to the line of argument pursued in Galatians. There can be no doubt that the exposition in Romans covers a wider field, and in many important points goes much deeper than the Epistle to the Galatians. The real relation between the two is more likely to be found, on the principle laid down by Dr. Bacon himself, in the fact that the Epistle to the Romans is an exposition of the gospel as he carried it from region to region and city to city throughout his ministry, coloured, no doubt, by the progress of his experience, but remaining fundamentally the same. The Epistle to the Galatians is not an exposition of the gospel to persons whom he had not addressed before, but a re-exposition of one fundamental element which had been attacked. That his discussion of this subject should result in many resemblances to the Epistle to the Romans lies in the nature of the case, but does not proceed from the fact that in writing either letter he has before him the form or specific purpose of the other.

Dr. Kirsopp Lake, in his recent work on *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, feels also that Romans and Galatians must in some way belong to the same period. But having adopted the wiser plan of determining the date of Galatians apart from the question of its relation to Romans, he then raises the question how the latter can be put into the same date as the former. He does this on the theory that the Apostle may have early in his ministry, perhaps even roused to it by the Galatian

controversy, set forth his gospel at length and in writing. This statement may have been used as a circular letter in various communities, and at Corinth he may have turned that very document into a letter to the Romans, inserting their name and appending to it the personal material of chap. xv. To this theory we shall refer further in the introduction to Romans. Suffice it to say at this point that hitherto it has been assumed that the Epistle to the Romans is the fixed date to which the Epistle to the Galatians must be drawn forward. Dr. Lake takes the Epistle to the Galatians as his fixed point, and, having placed it early, seeks to draw the Epistle to the Romans back to its date. It is a modification of the latter theory which will be advanced in our discussion of the date of Romans.

3. The question of the date of Galatians is very closely bound up with a comparison of the narrative portion in Gal. i., ii. with the story of Paul's life given by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles. From this comparison very great difficulties arise, some of which are probably insoluble, and yet on all of which a solution must be assumed or suggested by one who ventures to name any date for the epistle. Let us see what the problems of this comparison are. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, asserts that Paul visited Jerusalem in all four times (ix. 19–30, xi. 27–30 and xii. 25, xv. 1–35, xxi. ff.). In the Epistle to the Galatians the Apostle himself describes two visits which he had paid previous to the writing of this letter to the mother-city of the Church (i. 18–24 and ii. 1–10). It is evident, of course, that the first visits correspond to one another, although there are many difficulties in

their minute comparison; and equally evident that the fourth visit in Acts was made after the writing of the epistle. The central question then bears upon the relations of the second visit in Gal. ii. 1–10 to the second and third visits described in Acts xi. and Acts xv., which we shall speak of as the "famine" and the "council" visits respectively. Concerning these three passages we have to deal with the following possibilities: (1) That the visit in Gal. ii. corresponds to the famine visit of Acts xi.; (2) that it corresponds to the council visit of Acts xv., Paul in writing to the Galatians having omitted all reference to the famine visit; (3) that Luke was confused in his account of this part of Paul's life and described as two separate events, namely, the famine and council visits, one visit which served both purposes of famine relief and formal consultation at the council of the apostles and elders. The third proposal we may rule out as one which not only is supported by very few scholars, but seems to imply a confusion of mind in the historian which is inconsistent with his proved care and attention to details in other parts of his work. We are left to identify the visit in Gal. ii. 1–10 with either the famine or the council visit in Acts.

The prevailing opinion has hitherto been that the visit in Gal. ii. 1–10 must be identified with the council visit in Acts xv., with the consequent assertion that Paul deliberately omitted all reference to the famine visit of Acts xi., perhaps because, as it was very brief and during it his attention had been concentrated upon famine relief, it had in his opinion no bearing upon the question of his relation to the apostles at Jerusalem. (As to the latter

point it may be enough to say here that it would surely have added to the force of his whole argument if he had said that he paid this visit to Jerusalem, when he was so sure of his authority as well as so absorbed in care of the poor with their sanction that he had no conversation at all with the apostles about the gospel !)

If we make a comparison of the descriptions given by Luke and Paul respectively of the first visit to Jerusalem (Acts ix. 19–30 ; Gal. i. 15–24), we shall learn the point of view of each narrator when describing the same event, and perhaps discover the kind of material which each selects from the great mass which may have been present to his mind for the specific purpose before him as he writes.

(*A*) THE FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

(Acts ix. 19–30 ; Gal. i. 15–24.)

It is perfectly evident that these narratives cannot be reconciled with one another in every detail, even although they certainly described the same general situation. At certain points the one is more specific than the other, as, of course, Luke's account is much longer than Paul's. Luke is intent on showing Paul's activity and his actual connection with the church at Jerusalem. It is one of the main purposes of his work to reveal the fundamental harmony of his own hero with those original apostles for whom also he cherished a profound reverence. It may be that his story reflects the memory of Barnabas rather than of Paul. Barnabas would naturally describe the matter from both sides, giving the movements of Paul and the outward

means by which he was brought into intercourse with the leaders at Jerusalem; and he would quite naturally describe the conditions under which he was compelled to leave the city. Paul, on the other hand, writes from the purely personal point of view as to his motive in going to Jerusalem, as to his relations with the authorities which was the main matter before his mind, omitting all reference to any other activities in which he was engaged. It was naturally important for him to state the fact that after this brief visit he went to live and work in regions remote from Jerusalem. The main points of apparent divergence between the narratives are that in Acts ix. 27 we hear of "the apostles," no names and no number being given, whereas Paul tells us that he only saw two. This can be easily accounted for, if we suppose that at this time the rest of the leaders were absent from Jerusalem, perhaps in consequence of the persecution described in Acts viii. 1–4. Another difference is to be found in the fact that Luke says he preached boldly at Jerusalem, while Paul makes no mention of this in Galatians. It would be most natural for him to go to the synagogues, where he would meet those who, like himself, were Hellenists or Grecian Jews. He could not avoid doing this if he stayed fifteen days, and he could hardly be there without being called upon to speak. That he does not refer to the plot which drove him from the city is not an important point; but it is interesting to remember that in 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15 he says that the Jews who had killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets "drave out us"—a statement which in its setting can only refer to the event before us, for evidently he is referring to the Jews at Jerusalem, and at no

other time previous to the writing of 1 Thess. was he so expelled. Another minor difficulty is to be found in his statement that he was unknown by face unto the churches of Judæa, whereas Luke tells us that he had preached at Jerusalem. But it is very hard to think, as we have just said, that Paul stayed even two weeks at Jerusalem and did not worship in the synagogue or elsewhere with his fellow-believers. Habit would take him there. The emphasis which Luke puts upon the statement that he preached "at Jerusalem" makes it more natural to suppose that the Apostle is writing in general terms of the churches in Judæa. It may be that in the back of his mind as he wrote was present the thought that the other apostles, though scattered abroad, were probably moving amongst these churches outside of Jerusalem. The chief difficulty is to be found in the fact that Luke omits all reference to the visit to Arabia, which intervened between his conversion and his visit to Jerusalem. Luke writes as if he had remained in Damascus for an indefinite period before going up to Jerusalem. But we must note that the narrative in Acts at this point is vague as to the lapse of time. He was "certain days with the disciples" (ver. 19), "when many days were fulfilled the Jews plotted against him" (ver. 23), "when he was come to Jerusalem" (ver. 26)—this is the writing of a man who does not know the whole story and fills in the gaps with vague references like these for the space of time covered by his narrative. It is, once more, important to notice that in another epistle (2 Cor. xi. 32) the Apostle refers to his escape from Damascus in terms which coincide singularly well with the statement in Acts ix. 24, 25.

(*B*) THE SECOND VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

(Acts xi. 27–30, xii. 25 and Gal. ii. 1–10.)

When we compare the second visit, described in Gal. ii. 1–10, with the famine visit (Acts xi. 27–30, xii. 25), we find them to contain the following facts in common: (*a*) Both accounts are concerned with a visit to Jerusalem. (*b*) In each case a "revelation" is referred to in connection with the visit (Acts xi. 28; Gal. ii. 2). (*c*) In each case the care of the poor is mentioned, though with differing emphasis. (*d*) In each case Barnabas is with Paul. (*e*) In Acts xii. 25 Barnabas and Paul return to Antioch, and in Gal. ii. 11 it seems natural to suppose that from the visit described down to ver. 10 he returned to Antioch. It seems, in view of all these facts, not unnatural to suppose that they are accounts of the same visit. Being written for different purposes, each omits what is essential to the other.

(*C*) PAUL'S "SECOND" VISIT, *NOT* THE COUNCIL VISIT.

There is not space to set forth the long and interesting account which Luke gives of the council at Jerusalem (Acts xv. 1–35). It is evident that some things are necessarily common to all three narratives before us. In each of them there was a journey from Antioch to Jerusalem; in each the persons with whom we are chiefly concerned were Paul and Barnabas; after each visit they returned to Antioch. We have already set forth the resemblances between the famine visit and Paul's second visit in Galatians. There are so few

resemblances that we shall have to reverse the procedure this time and first emphasise the differences between Acts xv. and Gal. ii. 1–10. These differences appear as follows: (*a*) In the manner of the interview with the Jerusalem apostles. In Acts xv. it is public, and in Gal. ii. it is described as private and personal throughout. (*b*) The discussion in Acts xv. was concerned with the public question whether the Gentile Christians should be compelled to be circumcised as a matter of universal and permanent policy. In Gal. ii. the discussion bears upon the gospel as Paul preached it, as a personal matter (ver. 2). The substance no doubt would be the same in the two interviews, but the form in which it came up is described as entirely different in these two passages. (*c*) The intrusion of false brethren. In the one case, Acts xv., they, both at Antioch and Jerusalem, fought openly and publicly as if engaged on their last battle, as indeed it turned out to be so far as the principle of circumcision was concerned. In the other case Paul describes them as false brethren "privily brought in to spy out our liberty," evidently referring to an attempt on their part to watch the Apostle's intercourse with Titus. In any case the interference of the false brethren in Galatians is something entirely different from their open work as described in Acts xv. (*d*) The result, as is described in these two passages, is naturally different. In Galatians the apostles give the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas and divide the field. In the other case, after a public debate before the whole Church, a formal decision is reached, recognizing God's grace among the Gentiles, refusing to insist on circumcision, and

setting forth the conditions under which social intercourse between the two classes should be maintained. And finally, formal action is taken in Acts xv. to promulgate the decision in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, on the basis of which it was hoped that henceforth the two sections of the Church might live at peace with one another.

The attempt to harmonize the two narratives as descriptions of one and the same visit to Jerusalem rests mainly upon the hypothesis that on this occasion there occurred both the public meeting which is described by Luke and a private one which is described by Paul. But this, while not impossible, leaves aside altogether the deep inconsistency between the nature of the problems which are said to have been discussed at this time. It ignores the question why Paul has not mentioned the public discussion and the decrees, which bore so directly in their negative and positive elements upon the other matter which forms the subject of the letter to the Galatians. Moreover, to urge that, Galatians having been written after the second visit to Galatia, Paul had then rehearsed these matters and did not need to repeat them here, is a dangerous use of the argument from silence. Paul never hesitated to repeat things, and could hardly have been so unwise as to save time or evade what was familiar, by omitting from so thorough and drastic a discussion of his subject a weapon which would have proved the most powerful in relation to the attitude of the authorities at Jerusalem towards himself, and upon the fundamental question of circumcision. For Paul and Barnabas were themselves intrusted with the "decrees"—a most telling proof of confidence,

If he actually delivered these decrees to the Galatian churches, as Luke says he did (Acts xvi. 4), the reason for avoiding all reference to them afterwards becomes extremely difficult to conceive. And at this point we may add that it seems hard also to see how he could have mentioned Titus as being at Jerusalem and escaping circumcision if he is writing after the circumcision of Timothy, described in Acts xvi. 3. Dr. Bacon gets over these difficulties easily by calling Acts xvi. 1–5 "unhistorical." On the whole matter it would be rash for any one to say that the case is clear for either conclusion, but to the present writer it seems very much easier to believe that Luke's story of the famine visit and Gal. ii. 1–10 describe different aspects, not in the least inconsistent with one another, of the same visit, than that Luke in Acts xv. is describing the same situation and the same form of discussion, and therefore the same visit as Gal. ii. 1–10, where the inconsistencies are fundamental.

4. Taking this account of these different passages as our basis, then the succession of events falls into an order which seems psychologically natural if we recognize that on the one hand the Jewish apostles did not take a single step towards the admission of the Gentiles into the Church, unless when driven to it by clear proofs of the will of God, and that Paul himself, though conscious of his call to be the apostle to the Gentiles, yet kept for himself as much as he could of his Jewish inheritance, and sought to carry with him the other apostles in his advance towards a larger freedom. (*a*) It was most natural that on his first visit Paul was more eager to get Peter's account of the principal facts con-

cerning Christ, especially as to His death and resurrection, than to discuss with him his own interpretation of the new faith. (*b*) It was most natural that after his work in Syria and Cilicia (of the details of which we know nothing), and the astonishing success of the work in Antioch (with Barnabas), he should seize the opportunity of the famine visit (A.D. 45–46) to hold private conference with the apostles who were then in the city. It was quite in accordance with their general spirit that these apostles should give to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, and agree that the latter should carry on their work among Gentiles while they themselves persevered with the preaching of the gospel to the Jews. For the Acts of the Apostles leaves the impression that they were always yielding to a force whose meaning and direction they did not fully understand. (*c*) It was most natural that soon after this agreement Peter should visit Antioch to promote this mutual understanding, and that his vacillation should compel Paul to argue out the matter face to face with him, even in the presence of those who were coercing his better judgment to an unworthy policy, by proving to him that he, without intending to deny the substance of the gospel, was yet destroying from the minds of the Gentile Christians their conviction as to the sole sufficiency of faith in Christ for salvation. (*d*) As the situation in Antioch raised an issue that had not even been discussed at the previous private conference, the relation between Jew and Gentile within the Christian Church, the conditions of their social intercourse, it was most natural also that the next step should be a thorough discussion and, if possible, a final settlement of this matter by agree-

ment with the authorities at Jerusalem, to whom Peter and the others "from James" held themselves responsible. Now this is the exact subject of the council at Jerusalem as described by Luke in Acts xv. That gathering discussed the whole matter in both of its bearings, namely, the relation of the gospel to the law of circumcision, *and* the future relations of Jewish and Gentile Christians in the light of persistent Jewish prejudices. The result, as we know, was that the council refused to insist on circumcision, but demanded that the Gentile Christians agree to abstain from four practices concerning which the Jewish Christians could not get rid of their social conscience, inherited from their past religious beliefs and implanted by training in their very souls. Why, then, does Paul in this narrative nowhere refer to that council and its decisions? It seems futile in the light of the whole purpose of his narrative to urge that he had already on his second missionary journey, which, as many think, immediately followed the council at Jerusalem, fully explained its provisions to the Galatian churches (Acts xvi. 1 ff.), and that he now felt no need to go over that ground again. In such a letter as this a matter so vital could not possibly have been ignored by him. The obvious answer to our question, therefore, is that the council at Jerusalem had not occurred when the Apostle wrote this letter to the Galatians. This conclusion, to which a number of recent writers have come, although for long considered impossible, seems to be the only one which explains simply and directly the succession of events and the facts contained in the letter itself.

The principal difficulties urged against this

conclusion, apart from the argument that Acts xv. and Gal. ii. 1–10 describe one and the same event, are as follows: (1) In the epistle itself Paul seems (iv. 13) to speak as if he had made more than one visit to the Galatian churches before the writing of this letter. These objectors translate two Greek words as the R.V. does—"Ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you *the first time*," which seems strengthened by the *margin*—"the former time." And many have held this to be conclusive. It has always been felt an unsatisfactory reply to urge that even in Acts xiii. 14 Paul had journeyed twice through Southern Galatia, and the words might refer still to the earlier of those two visits to each of the churches (except Derbe!). But new light upon the Greek language as used in Paul's day has settled this matter. The word was correctly translated by the A.V. "at the first." "It is," says Dr. Lake, "in the Koine (*i.e.* colloquial) Greek more common in this sense ('original') than in the more classical significance, and in the New Testament this is almost indisputably its meaning in all the ten passages in which it is found" (2 Cor. i. 15; Eph. iv. 22; 1 Tim. i. 13, etc.) (*The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 266).

(2) The epistle, it is urged further, belongs more naturally to the atmosphere of the central period of Paul's missionary activity—the period when 1 and 2 Corinthians were written. There, too, we find his apostolic authority attacked; and especially in 2 Corinthians x. ff. he writes in his self-defence with a passion which nowhere else appears as it does in Galatians. Yet it is admitted by the more candid writers that there is a real distinction

between the points at issue in Galatians and 2 Corinthians respectively. In the latter there is almost no purely doctrinal discussion, whereas in the former it is upon the doctrinal problems that the main force of the argument is concentrated. In Galatians there is indeed a personal element involved, but that relates to two points: first, his relation to the authorities at Jerusalem, and, second, his consistency in proclaiming the same message in different circumstances. These personal considerations bear directly upon the authority under which and the sincerity with which he delivers his message. In 2 Corinthians, on the other hand, it is "personalities" in the opprobrious sense of that term which are prominent. The late Dr. Dods met this difficulty by urging that Galatians must come after 2 Corinthians because the doctrinal would more naturally follow the personal aspects in any controversy. The very opposite is the case. Great controversies in the history of the Church have almost invariably begun on matters of principle and method, and passed on to "personalities" in the later stages. And the reason for this is obvious, where men are sincere and where the subjects of discussion are of profound importance. Hence it is more likely than not that in the controversy between Paul and the Jewish Christians the first attack would be made upon the substance of his teaching, not without reference to the question of his authority; and Paul's reply would not ignore the latter, but would be concerned mainly with the doctrines. It is natural, when his victory had been won both at Jerusalem (for even Acts xv. describes a great victory in spite of compromise) and in Galatia,

with whose churches he afterwards maintained fellowship, that the controversy should be turned by his enemies into bitter misrepresentation and slander of his own character. If the theory maintained elsewhere in this introduction regarding the origin of the Roman epistle holds good, then we have an easy explanation of the fact that the Galatian form of controversy did not recur at Ephesus and Corinth. For the Apostle, having learnt his lesson in Galatia, would be more sedulous about grounding his first converts in the very depth of those convictions which had been so easily shaken in Galatia. His enemies would, therefore, be forced to use other weapons than those of argumentation on the fundamental principles involved, and these included the "personalities" of 2 Corinthians. On the whole it would seem as though Galatians belongs more naturally to the controversial atmosphere of the earlier than of the later period of his missionary activity.

If these considerations hold, then we must conclude that the Epistle to the Galatians was written after Peter's visit to Antioch, and before the council of Jerusalem which resulted from his conduct during that visit. This will help to explain two features in the Epistle to the Galatians. The first is his astonishment that they should have so quickly turned away from his gospel. The second is his intense grief on discovering both the malignity of his opponents and the power of their influence among his converts. This theory also explains the omission of the name of the Galatian churches from the regions to which the decrees of the council were sent (Acts xv. 23), for these

churches cannot as yet have been well known to the authorities at Jerusalem, and the letter was addressed to churches where men had appeared who professed to be emissaries from Jerusalem. We have no proof that the agitators in Galatia made this claim. Further, this date helps us to understand why the Apostle, when he made his second visit to Galatia, did deliver these decrees to those churches, for on the one hand they would enable him firmly to establish his authority as an apostle equal to the other apostles, and they would crowd on that side of it the argument of his epistle. On the other hand, he would be anxious to make peace with the Jewish Christians, in the same way, by persuading the Gentiles to observe the limitations of custom in relation to the four prohibitions. Even the circumcision of Timothy is more easily explained, difficult as it still is and always will be, when we see the Apostle, after having written this uncompromising epistle, yet bringing to those very churches that deliverance from Jerusalem which maintained the principles of his gospel intact, while in the practical affairs of social intercourse it made compromise possible. This position is not affected by the further fact that we never hear of those "decrees" again in that form. Like so many later efforts of ecclesiastical authority, they served only for a brief and local interest and then vanished from active history.

One more point has some importance. In Gal. ii. 12 Paul says that "certain came from James." Now, if he was writing after the council, that remark, which undoubtedly implies that they were sent by James to restrict liberty, would have been most ungracious. For those men were

deliberately and solemnly repudiated by the apostles (Acts xv. 24), including James himself. The only fair explanation of Paul's words, with their inevitable implication, is that he wrote before that repudiation took place. The men professed to speak with James's authority: Peter was afraid, even Barnabas was confused, and Paul accepted their story. Later he found that they were not "from James" *in that sense.*

PLAN OF THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

Part I. Paul's Apostolic Authority: chaps. i.–ii. 21.

1. Salutation (i. 1–5).
2. Galatians forsaking the one only gospel (i. 6–10).
3. The Call of God the only foundation of his Apostleship (i. 11–17).
4. Paul's First Visit to Jerusalem as an Apostle (i. 18–24).
5. Paul's Second Visit to Jerusalem (ii. 1–10).
   (*a*) Private interview with the "pillars" (vers. 1–5).
   (*b*) Result of interview (vers. 6–10).
6. The threatened defection of Peter (ii. 11–14[a]).
7. Paul's summary of his argument with Peter (ii. 14[b]–21).

Part II. The Central Argument—The Law and the Gospel: chaps. iii. 1–v. 12.

1. The Galatians stultifying themselves (iii. 1–5).
2. The Law of faith exemplified by Abraham (iii. 6–9).
3. The Curse of the Law and the Redeemer (iii. 10–14).

4. Covenant and Promise, Law and Gospel (iii. 15–22).
(*a*) Covenant and Promise (vers. 15–18).
(*b*) Law and Gospel (vers. 19–22).
5. Law and Faith—Tutor and Christ (iii. 23–29).
6. Bond-service and Sonship (iv. 1–7).
7. God or "no-gods"? (iv. 8–11).
8. The Apostle and his children (iv. 12–20).
9. Mount Sinai or Jerusalem above? (iv. 21–v. 1).
10. Freedom or Bondage? (v. 2–6).
11. The Galatians and their disturbers (v. 7–12).

Part III. Practical Issues of the Gospel: chaps. v. 13–vi. 10.
1. Freedom and Licence (v. 13–15).
2. The war of Flesh and Spirit (v. 16–26).
3. Mutual Relations of "the Spiritual" (vi. 1–5).
4. Spiritual Boons and Carnal Gifts (vi. 6–10).

Conclusion: vi. 11–18.
1. An Autograph Message (vi. 11–16).
2. The Stigmata of Jesus and Benediction (vi. 17, 18).

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE CHURCH AT ROME.

There is abundant evidence from secular historians that there were at the period of Paul's life large settlements of Jews in the city of Rome. From their invincible loyalty to their law, and unwillingness to compromise its external rules, they gave much trouble to the authorities, who from time to time attempted to drive large numbers of them from the city (cf. Acts xviii. 2). For example,

Pompey in B.C. 64 deported large numbers from Judæa to Rome as prisoners of war, and proceeded to reduce them to slavery. But they proved to be not only refractory but impossible as slaves, since there were so many of their laws and customs which they would rather die than break, even in the service of their masters. Accordingly large numbers of them had to be set free, and they settled in the city. The increase of commercial traffic with the East naturally drew to the capital of the empire many thousands of this enterprising race which has ever, when movement was open to them, tended to concentrate themselves at the centres of commercial power. It has been conjectured that the synagogue at Jerusalem, known as that of the Libertines or Freedmen, was built for the use of Jews visiting Jerusalem, who had their home in the city of Rome (Acts vi. 9); and we are told that men from Rome were in Peter's audiences on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 10).

Now it is clear from direct allusions in the Epistle to the Romans that the church which Paul addressed in that city contained Jews (ii. 17, iv. 1, vii. 4–6, ix. 10). It may be that from that synagogue of the Libertines men returned to Rome who had been converted to Christianity under the preaching of Stephen and his successors, and that they naturally brought with them the broad view of the gospel for which he died, and thus were willing in their turn to make converts to the new faith from among those Gentiles at Rome who were already through the synagogue interested in the teaching of the Old Testament. We know that in all the cities visited by Paul where there was a synagogue such Gentile inquirers had gathered, and they

usually represented the finer minds and the higher characters among the non-Jewish people.

That there were Gentiles also in the church at Rome when Paul wrote, and that they were numerous and an influential portion of the community is evident from the whole manner of the epistle as well as from distinct references (i. 5, 6, 11–15, xv. 8–12, 16–18). Indeed, the argument of the great chapters, ix., x., xi., would seem in many of its phrases and in its whole note of urgency to be exaggerated and unmeaning if addressed to a community where Gentile Christians were in a small minority. Rather would it be most powerful and truly relevant where the Gentiles had proved to be much more receptive towards the gospel than the Jews.

It is clear from the fact that the Apostle is desirous to have some part in the development of the Christian faith in the Roman church, and also that he, according to his own words (xv. 20), makes it his aim and ambition to preach the gospel where no apostle has preceded him, that he did not regard either his writing to the Roman Christians or his proposed visit to them as any breach of this rule. From this it may be conjectured that until this time Rome had not been visited by any of the apostolic circle. It is hard to believe that the tradition which describes Simon Peter as the founder of this church can have more authority than this argument from the language and known policy of Paul himself. This, of course, does not mean that at a later date than this epistle Peter may not have visited the Roman church.

THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE EPISTLE.

It is curious and interesting to find that the external evidence for the Epistle to the Romans lies primarily within the New Testament itself. Here our most important witness is 1 Peter. No less than nine passages in that brief epistle can be cited as containing distinct parallels in thought and language with Romans. (The most striking are 1 Pet. ii. 6–8 with Rom. ix. 32 f.; 1 Pet. ii. 10 with Rom. ix. 25; 1 Pet. ii. 5 with Rom. xii. 1; 1 Pet. iii. 8–11 with Rom. xii. 16–18; 1 Pet. i. 14 with Rom. xii. 2; 1 Pet. i. 22 with Rom. xii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. ii. 13–17 with Rom. xiii. 1–7.)

There is a widely held opinion that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written from Rome, although the name of its author remains in obscurity. That epistle undoubtedly contains many sayings and thoughts which may easily be taken as echoes of the Epistle to the Romans, but two passages are frequently cited as indicating a more deliberate use of the latter epistle by the author of the former (cf. Heb. xi. 11, 12, 19 and Rom. iv. 17–21; Heb. x. 30 and Rom. xii. 19). There is a very clear resemblance between the doxology in Jude 24, 25 and Rom. xvi. 25–27: opinions differ, of course, as to which of these may be the earlier. When we come to the resemblances between the epistle of James and Romans we reach a subject over which there has been much dispute. The treatment of the subject of faith and works by James does not require us to assume that the writer had the Epistle to the Romans before him, as a hearsay knowledge of what Paul taught might have been sufficient reason for his warning against

a possible misconception of that teaching, while a full knowledge of all Paul taught, as in the Epistle to the Romans, would have shown James how unnecessary his warning was. This consideration makes it difficult to believe that James wrote his epistle with the actual words of Romans before him. Yet the parallels usually cited between the two epistles are too numerous to be ignored, and certainly leave us with a literary problem of which no final explanation has yet been given. (Cf. Jas. i. 2–4, Rom. v. 3–5; Jas. i. 6, Rom. iv. 20; Jas. i. 22, Rom. ii. 13; Jas. ii. 21, Rom. iv. 1, 2; Jas. iv. 1, Rom. vii. 23; Jas. iv. 11, Rom. ii. 1.)

In addition to this very convincing mass of external evidence we must very briefly call to mind the fact that the internal evidence for the authenticity of Romans is, as in the case of Galatians, practically invincible. Here we have a letter of such intellectual power that a man like Samuel T. Coleridge could speak of it as perhaps the greatest product of the human intellect. It does not come forth from a brooding recluse, an unknown genius, a man willing to hide his personality behind another and a greater name, or in the darkness of anonymity. The letter breathes the very spirit of a man engaged in one of the greatest movements of the human mind. Even if we exclude the word "Rome" from the letter, and cut off the last chapters, as some would do, we have in the remainder a document stamped, not merely with a great personality, but with the forms of a great and momentous controversy which must have had wide ramifications, and could not possibly have occurred without throwing up other writings besides this one. The epistle bears within itself, in its innumerable parallels with

other epistles of Paul, proof that it sprang from the same mind which minted the letters to the Galatians, Thessalonians, Corinthians, and even those of the period of his Roman imprisonment. If the Apostle Paul was not the author of Romans, then, as has been frequently remarked, we may well give up the attempt to identify the author of any document produced by the history of the ancient world.

THE INTEGRITY AND DATE OF THE EPISTLE.

In connection with the integrity of the Epistle to the Romans there is a very complicated situation which must be described as briefly as possible.

1. The main facts are as follows:—

(*a*) The words "in Rome" are omitted from i. 7, 15 by one MS. which was written in both Latin and Greek. This was probably not done of his own accord by the writer of that MS., but must be due to some other MS. which he used. (*b*) In the last chapter, according to the Received Text (used in A.V.), the benediction occurs both at ver. 20 and ver. 24. This is best accounted for by supposing that originally it stood at ver. 20, that some MSS which omitted the doxology (for whatever reason) may have carried the benediction to the end of the epistle (ver. 24). Subsequent copyists finding it in both places in different MSS inserted it twice. (*c*) There is evidence which leads some to suppose that a number of early writers had copies of the epistle which did not contain chaps. xv. and xvi. (1) It is almost certain that Marcion (about A.D. 150), who made a collection of Paul's epistles, omitted the

whole of chaps. xv. and xvi., including the doxology. This may have been either because he did not find them in the MS. he used, or because he was in the habit of deliberately cutting out passages which he did not like on theological grounds. (2) Other early writers of the second and third centuries who quote the epistle freely never quote these two chapters. This, of course, may have been simply because they did not contain material "adapted for use." (3) Certain MSS of the Latin translation, known as the "Vulgate," which have arranged the epistles in sections for the purposes of public worship, do not include these chapters. This, again, may have been due to the feeling that they did not contain material particularly valuable for public reading. (*d*) The doxology has had a complicated history in the MSS. (1) The chief MSS (one going back to the fourth century) all put it at the close of chap. xvi. and only there. (2) But in a few it is placed at the end of chap. xiv. and there only. (3) Some copyists insert it at both places, probably those who found it at each of these places in different MSS. (4) Marcion and a few MSS omit the doxology altogether.

2. Explanations of these facts. Of the many theories worked out to explain this peculiar tangle of facts we can only give some of the most important. (*a*) There is the theory that both chaps. xv. and xvi. are spurious. This is opposed (1) by the evidence of the great MSS, and (2) by the internal evidence of the chapters themselves. The chief points are that the argument of chap. xiv. does not really close until xv. 13, and that the remainder of the chapter is too characteristic to have been invented and too irrelevant to the purposes of a forger.

(*b*) There is the interesting theory of Lightfoot, who held that the letter as Paul sent it to Rome may have ended at xvi. 24; that later on, perhaps while in Rome, the Apostle himself resolved to use it as a circular letter and for this purpose ended it at the close of chap. xiv., added the doxology, and removed the words "in Rome" from i. 7, 15. Later copyists, confronted with the longer and shorter forms, would naturally remove the doxology to the place it now occupies. (*c*) Another theory is that the epistle as it stands is the original letter of Paul. Its mutilation dates from Marcion, who had doctrinal reasons for cutting off the epistle at the close of chap. xiv. so as to omit the objectionable first part of chap. xv. Nothing in the remainder was of value, and the doxology was also doctrinally objectionable to him. The variations above described would naturally arise from this source. (*d*) Another view of the matter has been argued out in a most interesting way by Dr. Kirsopp Lake in his recent work, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul.* His argument must be given very briefly and with the omission of many important points. Recently discovered Marcionite writings make it probable that Marcion did not remove the words "in Rome" from i. 7, 15. He knows that this is a letter to the Romans. Dr. Lake gives other more recondite reasons for supposing that he found the epistle in the short form—that is, that chaps. xv. and xvi. were omitted. He concludes that it may well have been "that 'Romans' was originally a general Epistle written by St. Paul at the same time as Galatians to the mixed churches which had sprung up around Antioch, and further on in Asia Minor." Assuming this, the next tentative step would be "that

St. Paul had sent a copy of the short recension to Rome from Corinth, and added the last chapters as an expansion of the practical exhortations, and as the greetings to the individual members of the church." When collections of letters began to be made in the beginning of the second century, the longer form of Romans would come to acquire more interest than the shorter, and as it was placed, in some collections at least, at the close of Paul's epistles to the churches, the doxology, which is not Pauline, would be added. But finally Dr. Lake withdraws chap. xvi. from the Epistle to the Romans. It was originally, as a number of other scholars have held, a letter written by Paul to introduce Phœbe to the church at Ephesus. The opinions given for this position are as follows: (1) The letter is "unsuitable" for Rome because it contains greetings to so many persons at a place so far away, which the Apostle had never visited. (2) The words of xvi. 17, 18 imply that Paul refers to his own teaching, and knows of internal troubles in the church to which this paragraph is addressed. (3) Epænetus is described as "the first fruits of Asia," and Ephesus is in Asia. (4) Prisca and Aquila had indeed come originally from Rome, but at this time were probably settled in Ephesus: cf. Acts xviii. 18; 1 Cor. xvi. 19 (written from Ephesus); 2 Tim. iv. 19. (5) The usual argument for the Roman destination of this chapter, based upon the number of names which have been found in Roman inscriptions, and which occur in this chapter, is not at all convincing to Dr. Lake when the facts are examined in detail, as he proceeds to do.

The chief difficulties which appear in the attractive argument of Dr. Lake are—*first*, that the

first paragraph of chap. xv. seems after all to be so closely connected with chap. xiv., and chap. xiv. without it seems to be so inconclusive that it is hard to think that in the first form of his circular letter the Apostle stopped where chap. xiv. now stops. *Second*, that in spite of his ingenious dealings with the names on the Roman inscriptions, the mass of evidence presented by Lightfoot, and added to since by other writers, leaves an impression which it is hard to resist, that these greetings were sent to that city. There is no convincing reason why even if Prisca and Aquila had taken up their abode in Ephesus they should not be on a visit to Rome; nor is it at all contrary to the probabilities that people who, being Jews or Gentiles of the better class, or even attachés of the Imperial household, might be frequently travelling backwards and forwards between Rome and the great centres of culture, commerce, and political administration, in which Paul had spent so many years of his life, should be personally known to him. Possibly also the number of those who were personally known to Paul in this list has been exaggerated. Not all the references necessarily imply that Paul had more knowledge of them than mutual friends could give (cf. note on xvi. 7).

Nevertheless, with the main argument underlying Dr. Lake's theory, the present writer is in deep sympathy. It seems most reasonable to believe that the Epistle to the Romans represents the groundwork of all Paul's teaching in all his churches. It is not necessary to believe that he had at any time written this out and circulated it as a document of instruction to his churches. It more probably arose, at what Paul believes to be

the close of his ministry in Asia and in Eastern Europe, from a desire to put into writing the substance of those teachings which he had found to be most powerful, in the form which had proved most convincing. If he had preserved notes of these addresses from an early period of his missionary career, and if he went over these notes as he prepared to dictate this letter, we have a reasonable explanation of the literary parallels between Romans and Galatians. It is no wonder then as he reviews his gospel, ere he leaves Asia and Greece for Italy and Spain, he digs deep down into his memory, and that he determines to write it out in a form which shall convey, not the elementary things taught by all the apostles in common, but those central features of his own message on which indeed they and he agreed, but which he more clearly than all others saw to be the very meaning of the work of Christ and the very secret of the salvation of men.

THE PURPOSE AND METHOD OF THE EPISTLE.

We must look a little closer at the fact that in writing to the Romans Paul has chosen to deal more systematically with the fundamental doctrines of his gospel than in any other of his epistles. In all of these others, including Galatians, he confines himself to certain topics which have arisen in the life of the church, upon which he finds it necessary to send a definite message. In some cases he reiterated what he had already taught, in others he dealt with new questions. But in writing to the Romans his whole attitude and purpose are different. They

have not set their problems before him. They have received the Christian message from various persons unknown to fame, though they may have been known to the Apostle himself; and he feels that it is of the utmost importance to describe to them in this elaborate manner the gospel as he viewed it, the implications of the truth as he believed they had received it. At only two points, namely, chaps. xiii. 1 ff. and xiv.–xv. 13, do we suspect that he is addressing himself to a particular feature in the consciousness and life of the Romans. But even in those passages he deals with subjects which must have been frequently presented to him in some form or another among other churches. The Roman church seems on the whole to be at peace within itself with only the possibilities of real difficulty regarding the questions discussed in chaps. xiv. and xv. (But cf. above on xvi. 17–20.) But it must be carefully noticed that even in this epistle Paul does not set himself to describe at length those facts and arguments with which he must have been always concerned when he first entered a new field, such as the "placarding" of Jesus crucified (Gal. iii. 1), the evidence for the Resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 1 ff.), and the proof of Jesus' Messiahship or Lordship. The purpose of the Apostle in this letter lies, then, somewhere between the tasks of laying the foundations and of meeting specific difficulties or settling specific controversies in a particular field. His aim is to set forth the substance of the gospel as he had found it necessary to do, in supplement of the first messages which he delivered in new communities. It is suggested elsewhere that the material used here may be traced back to the time

when he found it necessary to defend his new churches as he established them against the possible inroads of Jewish Christian agitators. His experience with the Galatian churches had taught him this. And it may well be that we hear of no repetition of that particular form of the controversy because everywhere after that bitter incident,—at Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, etc.,—wherever his stay was long enough to allow of it, he took care to ground his disciples very deeply in the substance of his gospel. It is that substance from which this letter has sprung. It would follow from this that the Epistle to the Romans does not represent the mood or particular standpoint of any hour in his life, but that it sets forth that which was involved in the thorough "confirming" of all his churches.

The teaching about sin, atonement, faith, and union with Christ is not specially adapted to the situation in Rome; nor is the argument in chaps. ix.–xi., regarding which, as of special interest, a few words may be added. This fundamental argument probably took shape in his mind gradually, for its central and agonizing problem must have been with him from the beginning. But certainly it is not written here in the atmosphere of the Epistle to the Galatians. This great discussion did not spring from the agony of a personal controversy and a local disappointment so keen as that reflected in Galatians. Rather does it arise out of long years of brooding and varied discussion of this great topic. Is it too much to suppose that in the very period before writing to Rome the problem presented in these chapters has absorbed his mind more intensely than usual and has been explicitly argued out?

This conjecture may be supported by two reasons. In the first place, he has been compelled to meet this question in the course of the exhortations addressed to the churches in Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia regarding the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem. We know how elaborately he organized this collection and how great was the importance which he attached to its successful consummation. The intense effort to secure sympathy for this movement must have forced his mind to answer many criticisms and strong objections made by Gentile Christians. Perhaps the very men who were most in sympathy with him would object most strongly to so unusual a step, unparalleled before the birth of the gospel, as raising a vast sum of money and presenting it to bitter enemies in the name of the church. In the second place, the Apostle's mind is full of apprehension about his approaching visit to Jerusalem. Very tenderly does he write of this in Rom. xv. 25 ff. The desire to go to that city sprang from an intense yearning to win the Jewish Christians to a deeper sympathy with their Gentile brethren, and therefore to a clearer faith in the gospel. It is his ardent hope and prayer that this collection will help him to enlighten his fellow-countrymen and lead Israel to believe in that larger brotherhood which Israel's Messiah has come to establish. When these chapters are looked at merely as addressed to Rome they seem irrelevant. When looked at in the light of the actual work in which Paul was engaged and the habitual thoughts of this period of his life, the great argument glows with a new and deeply personal meaning. We then know why he says that he has "great sorrow

and unceasing pain in his heart"; that he could "wish himself anathema from Christ" for his brethren's sake; that his heart's desire and supplication to God is for them; that he cannot bear to think that God has cast off His people. These exclamations came out of one of the intensest periods of emotion in the life of the great Apostle.

PLAN OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

Introductory, (1) Formal and Personal (i. 1–7).
(2) Paul's longing to preach the gospel at Rome (i. 8–18).

Part I. The Universal Need of Salvation: chaps. i. 18–iii. 20.
(1) The doom of the Gentile world (i. 18–32).
(*a*) The betrayal of knowledge (i. 18–23).
(*b*) The resultant and judicial degradation (i. 24–32).
Note on Paul's picture of society.
(2) The condemnation of the Jew (ii. 1–iii. 20).
(*a*) The judge is judged (ii. 1–11).
(*b*) The law of conscience (ii. 12–16).
(*c*) The actual and the ideal Jew (ii. 17–29).
(*d*) The advantage of the Jew and the justice of God (iii. 1–8).
(3) The whole race declared guilty by Scripture (iii. 9–20).

Part II. The Method of Salvation: chaps. iii. 21–viii. 31.
Fundamental Statement: The supreme act of justification, or how men are put in righteous relations with God (iii. 21–26).
Transition paragraph (iii. 27–31).
1. The principle of justification by faith (chap. iv.).
(1) Faith and works (iv. 1–8).
(2) Faith and circumcision (iv. 9–12).
(3) Faith and "the law" (iv. 13–17).
(4) The practical power of faith (iv. 18–22).

(5) Conclusion: the unity of Abraham's faith and ours (iv. 23–25).

Note on iv. 1–25.

2. Justification by faith and final salvation (v. 1–11).
3. One sin and a world of death, one death and a world of righteousness (v. 12–21).

Note on "Much More."

4. The justified man and the new life (vi. 1–14).
5. Slaves to law or freemen through grace (vi. 15–23).
6. Illustration from the law of marriage (vii. 1–6).
7. The mastery of sin and the meaning of the law (vii. 7–25).
   (1) The function of law (vii. 7–13).
   (2) The hopeless war and the deliverance (vii. 14–25).

Note on vii. 7–24.

8. The Spirit of God in the life of the justified man (chap. viii.).
   (1) The spirit of freedom and life (viii. 1–11).
   (2) The spirit of sonship (viii. 12–17).
   (3) The universal and the Christian hope (viii. 18–25).
   (4) Further grounds of confidence (viii. 26–30).
      (*a*) The Spirit of prayer (viii. 26, 27).
      (*b*) The perfecting will of God (viii. 28–30).
   (5) The assurance of faith (viii. 31–39).

Part III. The Election of Israel: chaps. ix.–xi.

Introduction (ix. 1–5).

1. The sovereign will of God (ix. 6–29)
   (1) The Divine plan is not frustrated (ix. 6–13).
   (2) First question—Is God unrighteous? (ix. 14–18).
   (3) Second question—God's will and man's responsibility (ix. 19–29).
2. Human responsibility (ix. 30–x. 21).
   (1) What are the facts? (ix. 30–x. 4).
   (2) The principles of law and faith (x. 5–13).
   (3) The need of proclamation (x. 14–16).
   (4) The rejection by Israel (x. 17–21).

3. The sin of Israel and the Divine grace (chap. xi.).
   (1) The remnant and the rejection (vers. 1–10).
   (2) The rejection as an instrument of grace (vers. 11–24)
   (3) The rejection temporary, mercy final (vers. 25–32).
   (4) The wonder of God's wisdom (vers. 33–36).

Part IV. The Justified Man in Action : chaps. xii. 1–xv. 13.

   (1) The renewed will towards God (xii. 1, 2).
   (2) Conduct in the Church (xii. 3–8).
   (3) Towards all men (xii. 9–21).
   (4) Towards the secular government (xiii. 1–7).
   (5) The law of love (xiii. 8–10).
   (6) The urgency of the hour (xiii. 11–14).
   (7) The duty of the strong (xiv. 1–xv. 13).
      (*a*) The presumptuous judgment (xiv. 1–12).
      (*b*) Responsibility for social influence (xiv. 13–23).
      (*c*) Summary of the situation (xv. 1–13).

Part V. Personalia : chaps. xv. 14–xvi. 27.

   (1) The spirit of Paul's apostleship (xv. 14–21).
   (2) Plans for visiting Rome (xv. 22–29).
   (3) A plea for intercession (xv. 30–33).
   (4) A personal introduction (xvi. 1, 2).
   (5) Personal salutations (xvi. 3–16).
   (6) A warning against divisions (xvi. 17–20).
   (7) Greetings from Paul's companions (xvi. 21–24).
   (8) The doxology (xvi. 25–27).

GALATIANS.

PART I. PAUL'S APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY.

(Gal. i.–ii. 21.)

1. SALUTATION (i. 1–5).

1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by
Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from
2 the dead;) and all the brethren which are with me, unto
3 the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you, and peace,
from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,
4 who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us
from this present evil world, according to the will of God
5 and our Father: to whom be glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

In ancient times the Semites, Greeks, and Romans put the names and titles or description of the sender as well as the recipient at the head of the letter, and accompanied them with some good wish, which in the East seems to have been generally "Peace" (cf. Ezra iv. 17, v. 7), and among Romans and Greeks was generally "Health" (cf. Acts xv. 23, xxiii. 26). In the New Testament we find the writers of letters using the conventional and polite form. The most striking exceptions are the Epistle to the Hebrews and the First Epistle of John, which contain no formal

address or signature. In the rest a new tone is given to the ancient form by the introduction of the names of God and of Christ in connection either with the name of the writer (Jas. i. 1) or of the recipients (1 Thess. i. 1), or with these and the greeting also (1 Cor. i. 1–3; 2 Cor. i. 1–2; Phil. i. 1–2; 2 Pet. i. 1–2). Paul uses great freedom in all three parts of the formula, adapting it to express his varied moods and motives in writing.

The formula in his Epistle to the Galatians is peculiar in every respect. (1) The description of himself as an apostle is cast, not in the form of a direct and joyous assertion (as even Rom. i. 1–5), but in a controversial mould. For he gives the first part of his letter (i. 1–ii. 14) to the proof that his apostleship was derived from a direct appointment of God, and that in its exercise he was not dependent upon, but an equal co-worker with, the other recognized apostles of Christ. (2) In naming those whom he addresses he uses unexampled brevity—"Unto the churches of Galatia." In other letters he invariably uses some phrase which describes their standing in Christ (1 Cor. i. 2), their relation to God (Rom. i. 7), or in a personal letter, his affection (1 Tim. i. 2; 2 Tim. i. 2). (3) To the usual greeting (ver. 3) he adds a significant statement regarding the work of Christ (ver. 4), and a doxology (ver. 5). This unusual form seems to be prompted by the feeling that the question at stake among these churches, whether they realized it or not, was the sufficiency of the saving work of Christ, and that sufficiency he here asserts with concentrated force.

1. On the name **Paul** see notes on Acts xiii. 9. **apostle** means one who is sent, with authority to speak for or represent the sender (Mark iii. 14; John xvii. 18). In the New Testament some besides the original band—the eleven—are called apostles. Not only Paul, but James and Barnabas and others (cf. Rom. xvi. 7) wore the title. The word was used in both a stricter and a broader manner. In the stricter usage it implied that a man was able to bear personal witness to the resurrection of Christ (Luke xxiv. 48; Acts i. 21–22 and xxvi. 16; 1 Cor. ix. 1), that he was conscious of a direct appointment from God to carry that witness from place to place, that this appointment should be divinely confirmed in the midst of his work (2 Cor. xii. 12). In this sense it came to be applied peculiarly to the eleven. Throughout the Acts we see the unique authority which they exercise. The great question which agitated some of the churches was whether Paul had a special and unique appointment from the Risen Christ which put his authority on a level with that of the original group of apostles. It is fully discussed by Paul himself in 2 Cor. x.–xiii., and in Gal. i. ii. **not of men, neither by man.** R.V., "not from men, neither through man." At the very start Paul denies that his apostleship was of human origin. Nor was it derived of God "through a man" (as R.V. margin correctly reads), such as Peter, the recognized leader of the eleven, or Ananias or Barnabas (see Acts ix. 10 ff., 27, xi. 25 f., xiii. 1–3), who were Christian believers before his own conversion. **but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father.** R.V., "through Jesus Christ and God the Father." Then he asserts that his

appointment came directly from the same source as that of the first apostles. The startling use of the word "by" or "through" as applied to God the Father, where we might expect "from," indicates the instinct of the apostolic mind to unite the name of Christ intimately and supremely with that of God. Having denied that he, as Apostle, was appointed "through a man," he naturally adopts a form of statement regarding Christ, "through" whom he did receive that appointment, which implies His Divinity. **who raised him from the dead.** See note on Rom. i. 4.

2. **and all . . . me.** Paul usually associates some one or two fellow-workers with himself in the sending of a letter (cf. 1 Thess. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 1), though he also on occasions uses his own name alone (Rom. i. 1). Nowhere else does he, as here, assert that he has a number of Christians in sympathy with his message. Whether he means here his coadjutors, or the members of the church (Antioch or Corinth or Ephesus) which he is visiting at the time, or even representatives from the Galatian churches who have described their situation to him, or a group of fellow-travellers from Antioch to Jerusalem, must depend mainly on the view which we take as to the date of the epistle. The words mean that in the central position of this letter he does not stand alone. **churches of Galatia.** See Introduction.

3. **from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.** It is best to read with margin of R.V., "from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Note again, as in ver. 1, that Christ is spoken of as the source of "grace and

peace" in co-ordination with God the Father. The words "grace" and "peace" have assumed a deeper meaning in the Christian Church than they had before. For grace is God's holy love and free mercy, and peace is that deep experience of the human heart when grace is at home there. And they come both from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And here East and West meet in the Christian benediction (see introductory note above).

4, 5. **who gave . . . Amen.** R.V., "our God and Father." This is no formal statement. It goes to the heart of the coming discussion, which, however it may involve other matters, above all involves this, whether Christ is the sole and sufficient Saviour. This affirms (1) that Christ's death was a deliberate act of His own will in relation to our sins, (2) that His purpose was to set us free, as from moral slavery, (3) that His act and its purpose flowed from the very will of God. **evil world.** Cf. Matt. vi. 13.

Gal. i. 6–10.

2. GALATIANS FORSAKING THE ONE ONLY GOSPEL.

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called
7 you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and
8 would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.
9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let

10 him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

Whatever view of the date and circumstances of this epistle (see Introduction) be taken, in either case it is clear that he had already warned the Galatians (ver. 9) of the great danger of the Judaizing group of teachers, and he thought that his words had taken firm hold of the churches. Hence he expresses astonishment with his very first word (ver. 6) that they had so quickly allowed themselves to be harassed and shaken by that hostile movement. He writes now promptly and hurriedly while the Judaizers are still among them (ver. 7), urging them not to forsake the gospel, the real gospel of God in Christ, for another message which is not a gospel at all. The difference between the two messages is so great that any one—were it Paul or an angel (ver. 8), or any one else—who should displace the first by the second, would deserve the utmost wrath of that God who has given to the world its salvation through Christ and His work alone (ver. 4). Who then shall say that Paul seeks only to please men, and compromises his message to win their favour? He has now proved (by vers. 6–9) that his one aim is to win God's favour, to be a true slave of Christ (ver. 10). It is painful to realize that the thanksgiving (Rom. i. 8; 1 Cor. i. 4; Col. i. 3) is here replaced by "anathema."

6. **I marvel.** Surprise underlies also the expressions in iii. 1–5, iv. 13–16, v. 7. **so soon.** R.V., "so quickly." In 2 Thess. ii. 2 the word is used of a few weeks. It must surely refer not to

a recent visit of Paul, but primarily to their conversion. They have so quickly turned back from the faith they accepted. **removed from him** (*i.e.* God). R.V., "removing." The word was used sometimes for one who deserts one party for another, or one set of principles for another (see Lightfoot's note; also Zahn, p. 42, note). They were in the act of becoming traitors not to Paul, but to God, whose "call" they had heard. **into the grace of Christ.** Rather, "in" or "by" the grace of Christ. The grace which appeared in Christ, which took Him to the cross, is the instrument of God's call to men. Whoso listens for the meaning of Calvary and finds Divine love there, he hears the home-call of "our God and Father" sounding through the night.

7. **which is not another.** It would be better to have only a comma after "another." They were being harassed by certain persons who were tempting them to accept another gospel. But there is not more than one gospel, that, namely, which has Christ for its substance. The question about each new claimant to our attention must be —Does his message alter the substance of that gospel? (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 4; Phil. i. 15–18). **gospel of Christ.** The supreme word of God to man, henceforth the fundamental law of human life, which determines human destiny, is the gospel which has Christ for its origin and its object. The word "gospel" is often used alone in the New Testament, but twenty-six times with an object which must be taken to interpret its content and meaning when used alone. In Matthew (iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14) it is "gospel of the kingdom"; eight times it is "the gospel of God" (Mark i. 14;

Rom. i. 1, xv. 16; 2 Cor. xi. 7; 1 Thess. ii. 2, 8, 9; 1 Pet. iv. 17); ten times "of Christ" (Mark i. 1; Rom. xv. 19; 1 Cor. ix. 12; 2 Cor. ii. 12, ix. 13, x. 14; Gal. i. 7; Phil. i. 27; 1 Thess. iii. 2; 2 Thess. i. 8, "our Lord Jesus"). It is not, then, merely the gospel which Jesus preached, any more than God preached it. It is the gospel which God and Christ created, and which therefore demands from us our absolute trust in God and Christ, who, for the Christian consciousness cannot be separated in this supreme act of the soul, dealing with its ultimate destiny. Six times it is the gospel of the preacher; where Paul sends the letter in his own name alone it is "my gospel" (Rom. ii. 16, xvi. 25); where others are associated with him it is "our gospel" (1 Thess. i. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 3; cf. Gal. i. 8, 9).

8, 9. **let him be accursed.** R.V., "let him be anathema." (Cf. Rom. ix. 3; 1 Cor. xii. 3, xvi. 22.) The word as used by Paul means, subject to the wrath and punishment of God. Paul is so sure that the gospel is the actual and holy will of God, revealed to men as their only means of salvation, that he believes opposition to it, when deliberate and persistent, can only receive and only deserve the condemnation of God. It is not personal vindictiveness that he feels, for he applies the word of doom to himself, or even to an angel, if either should resist that gospel. Expulsion from a Christian church on doctrinal grounds was never advocated in the New Testament, even when the gravest truths were being discussed, and such expulsion is not meant by this phrase. This is not an "ecclesiastical use" of the term "anathema," as some suggest. To

hate and fight the free mercy of God in Christ to all men must be to lose mercy for oneself. And Paul cannot wish that principle abolished, though he wishes with all his heart that the Jews may escape its operation through obedience of faith (cf. Rom ix. 3).

10. **For . . . God?** R.V., "For am I now persuading men, or God?" **if I yet pleased men.** R.V., "if I were still pleasing men." Or, in other words, "Can it now be said (after vers. 8, 9) that I am willing to weaken my attitude in order to ingratiate myself with the great people at Jerusalem?" In this verse the Apostle probably refers to one of the personal accusations which Judaizers were urging against him among the Galatian churches. They not only said that he had received his apostleship and primary instruction in the gospel from the original apostles at Jerusalem, and had misrepresented it in Galatia, but that he habitually accommodated himself to Jewish prejudice when occasion demanded, and especially when he went back to Judæa. In a later passage (v. 11) he again meets the insinuation that when he, Paul, was in Judæa he preached circumcision, he curried favour with the authorities, he did not insist upon that definite line between law and gospel as he had done in Galatia. This deadly mode of attack accounts for the passion of the preceding verses (i. 8, 9), and for the triumphant challenge of this verse, as if he said, "Can it now be urged that I have proved myself false in Judæa to the gospel which I preached to you in Galatia, that I am intent upon the approval of human beings? It is clear that if I were at this date in my

career, and with that motive, untrue to my gospel as I preached it in Galatia, I should have ceased to be the slave of Christ, my one sole owner and master."

Many interpreters fail to notice that throughout chaps. i. and ii. the Apostle has this double attack to meet: first, that he was dependent on the original apostles for what he knew of the gospel, and secondly, that he was afraid to confront them with the kind of gospel which he had disseminated in Galatia. And these two chapters were written to disprove both accusations. They must be kept steadily in mind as we read on, for they *both* control the whole story as he tells it.

Gal. i. 11–17.

3. THE CALL OF GOD THE ONLY FOUNDATION OF HIS APOSTLESHIP.

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was
12 preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it
of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of
13 Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in
time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I
14 persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: and profited
in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own
nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of
15 my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me
16 from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to
reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the
heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and
17 blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which
were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

Paul now enters upon a brief survey of his career as an apostle, as far as that is necessary to establish himself against the attack of these subtle and unscrupulous enemies, by proving his independent position as an apostle appointed and instructed directly by the Risen Christ, and his consistency everywhere and at all times in maintaining the purity of the gospel of grace over against the claims of the Mosaic law. There are four main paragraphs in this historical summary. The first (vers. 11–17) goes back to his conversion in order to prove the Divine origin of his gospel as a direct revelation to himself (11-12): (1) by describing his previous standing as a thorough-going Jew and a bitter zealot against the gospel (13, 14); (2) by reference to his conversion as an act of God (15, 16*a*); (3) by the statement that for three years thereafter he had no contact with the apostles (16*b*, 17).

11. **But . . . man.** R.V., "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man." The Apostle uses the formal word "make known unto you" when he wishes to introduce a particularly important statement (cf. 1 Cor. xii. 3, xv. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 1). With special solemnity, and in greater fulness, he reaffirms the statement of ver. 1. In these verses (11, 12) he utters his claim which it will take two whole chapters to establish completely. "After man." In a moment of insight Matthew Arnold said "Christianity is not natural," by which he meant that its central truth, and its challenge to the real tendencies of the human heart, were not such as mankind would be expected to evolve. So here, the Apostle insists that his gospel by its

very nature is not the kind of message a human mind could have invented. It had no earthly origin.

12. **of man.** R.V. margin, "from a man." **but by the revelation.** R.V., "but it came to me through revelation." Each of the three clauses in this verse is made the subject of proof afterwards. (1) A gospel that is from heaven might have been communicated to Paul by other men, as it was by him to the Galatians. But he denies that he got it "from a man." (2) The gospel must be taught by man to man in the fulness of its meaning and power, even as he had taught it to them. But he denies that any man had so taught him. (3) Jesus Christ Himself (and not a man) was both giver and teacher of this gospel, and that directly, immediately, by an act which can only be called "revelation." The Apostle does not restrict this revelation to the event known as his conversion. Rather would it seem from the tone of the following verses, especially ver. 17, that the revealing work of Jesus Christ upon his mind, in which the nature of the gospel was taught to him, extended from his first visit to Damascus to his return there from Arabia.

13. **my conversation.** R.V., "my manner of life." "conduct" (see Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*). **wasted.** R.V., "made havock." Better still, "was destroying." Paul recalls to the Galatians what he had already told them of his own past. Ashamed and humiliated as he always felt when his mind went back to the days preceding his conversion, he yet saw that it must give his message greater power to stand before men as one who had once, in full conviction and religious zeal, hated

and wasted the congregations of those who believed Jesus to be the Messiah. The vigorous language of Luke (Acts viii. 3, ix. 1–5) no doubt reflects the force with which Paul in personal conversation described those days. The conversion of Paul has always been looked on as one of the great "proofs of Christianity," and in this its defenders do but echo his own judgment. One fine point grammarians emphasize—that the tense of the two words "was persecuting" and "was destroying" implies the fact that he had failed in the latter aim. He had persecuted, but he had not destroyed the Church (1 Cor. xv. 9; Phil. iii. 6).

14. **profited.** R.V., "advanced." **above . . . nation.** R.V., "beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen." He is not boasting, but recalling his reputation among his Jewish compatriots (cf. Phil. iii. 3–11). It can only be with bitterness that he looks back to the days when his passion for the traditional beliefs of his sect made him notorious as a "zealot," one of the most narrow and determined groups in the Jewish circles of those days. See notes on Luke vi. 15; Acts i. 13, xxi. 20, xxii. 3, and note how he rings the changes on the idea in 1 Cor. xv. 12; Tit. ii. 14; also 1 Pet. iii. 13. It was in the name of this bitterest sect that he persecuted the Church. Either Judaism or Christ was his alternative both before and after conversion. No compromise was possible in his mind as he contrasted these two claimants to his faith and service.

15. R.V., "But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb." Lightfoot would ignore the physical

separation at birth, and read—"separated me from before my birth." In any case, the words express the abiding conviction of the Apostle that the will of God had planned his life from the beginning. **called . . . grace.** The eternal will works in time and deals with the human will. It takes the form of a call, a summons to an intelligent being, which requires an intelligent response. And the Apostle was "called" through all those facts in Christ and that revelation of the Divine Spirit, which are summed up in the glorious word "grace."

16. **to reveal his Son in me.** This cannot mean that the vision near Damascus had no outward reality. Paul is thinking of all that God did which resulted in his assurance of the presence of Christ in his heart and life. Lightfoot holds that for "in me" we should translate "through me." For Paul seems to have realized from the beginning that the call of God, the appearance of Christ to him, committed him to declare the universal nature of that grace, even its direct authority over the Gentiles (cf. Acts xxii. 15, 21, xxvi. 16 ff.). **that I might preach him,** or "that I might make him an evangel"—a message that all is well in Him with mankind.

17. The first assertion of independence is found in the last clause of ver. 16 and this verse. Something in him had from the first resisted the natural tendency to consult other men. The sympathy and help of **flesh and blood,** even the instruction of those who were already apostles, were deliberately avoided. He went off **immediately** to Arabia and returned thence to Damascus. Three years were spent in this life of apparent

solitude. We must remember that before his conversion Paul already knew something, perhaps much, of what was affirmed by believers concerning Jesus as the Christ. That knowledge was the reason for his persecuting zeal, but it now passed into his new life, to be thought through afresh in the light of the self-revelation of God in the Risen Christ to him. **Arabia** refers evidently to the region extending east and south from Damascus, over which Aretas IV. was king, and which for a brief period seems to have included Damascus within its boundaries (2 Cor. xi. 32). **Damascus** is not named above. But throughout, Paul assumes that his readers know his story (cf. ver. 13), and understand that it was from Damascus he went into Arabia and returned again.

Gal. i. 18–24.

4. PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM AS AN APOSTLE.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter,
19 and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles
20 saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the
things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie
21 not. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and
22 Cilicia; and was unknown by face unto the churches of
23 Judea which were in Christ: but they had heard only,
That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth
24 the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified
God in me.

In this, the second, paragraph of his historical statement, the Apostle states three facts: (1) that

of his own will he paid a formal visit to Peter at Jerusalem, for a brief period, and of the other apostles he saw none except James, the Lord's brother; (2) that he had no further contact with Judæan churches for many years; (3) that these churches nevertheless heard of his work elsewhere, and rejoiced in it. These facts prove (1) that during this period he had not been working under the authority or guidance of the original apostles, and yet (2) that his work, his message, was not opposed, but rather devoutly welcomed by the Christian communities of Judæa, of whom the apostles were the leaders.

18, 19. The **three years** must be reckoned from his conversion; cf. Luke's phrase "after many days" (Acts ix. 23) and with that 1 Kings ii. 38 (Gr. trans.). In this letter the names Cephas and Peter are both used, but not Simon. **James** (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 5, xv. 7), not one of "the twelve," was of apostolic quality, and became the recognized and permanent head of the Christian community at Jerusalem and author of the Epistle of James.

20. This solemn oath reveals (1) the importance which Paul attaches to his act of self-defence; (2) the clearness of his memory; (3) the sincerity of his statements. He does not refer to the attempt on his life (Acts ix. 29), possibly because he is avoiding all irrelevant details.

21. According to Ramsay (*Historical Commentary*, §§ 14, 15), the **regions** means certain districts within the Roman Province of Syria—Cilicia. There is no real inconsistency with Acts ix. 30, for Tarsus, his own city, was the capital of Cilicia, and most probably he made it his headquarters (cf. Acts xi. 25).

22. On the phrase **churches of Judea which were in Christ,** see Hort's *The Christian Ecclesia,* pp. 107–118. "In Christ" distinguishes between the Jewish worshippers of God under "the law" and those groups who now worshipped Him "in Christ."

23, 24. While he remained personally unknown to the Judæan Christians (ver. 22), they continued to hear of his persistent preaching of **the faith.** With great joy he records their joy. **in me** (cf. ver. 16), on account of him, their hearts went up in gratitude and praise to God.

Gal. ii. 1–10.

5. PAUL'S SECOND VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

(*a*) Private interview with three "pillars" (vers. 1–5).

1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem
2 with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run,
3 or had run, in vain. But neither Titus, who was with me,
4 being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ
5 Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

The third paragraph of his personal defence (ii. 1–10) is conveniently divisible into two portions, viz., vers. 1–5 and vers. 6–10. The visit to Jerusalem which is described here forms the subject

of one of the most difficult problems in apostolic Church history. For reasons already given in the Introduction, it is assumed here that we may identify this visit more easily with Acts xi. 27–30 and xii. 25 than with Acts xv. 1 ff. In the first section (1–5) Paul asserts that on this second visit to Jerusalem he consulted privately with the leaders regarding the gospel which he habitually preached, but that there was no compromise involved in his conduct. This negative result is proved in vers. 3 and 5.

1. **Then fourteen years after.** R.V., "Then after the space (*m.* in the course) of fourteen years." Most expositors hold that this means fourteen years after the first visit to Jerusalem, but Ramsay, Jowett, and others argue that we must date it from the conversion (see Introduction). **Barnabas, Titus.** If we are to identify this visit with the second one in Acts (xi. 27), then Titus may have been taken with them as an assistant in the laborious task of distributing the supplies of food which they had brought from the Christians of Antioch for the poor of the church at Jerusalem, but not improbably also to let him appear before the authorities as an uncircumcised believer, whose ability and energy and consecration would prove him a subject of God's grace.

2. **revelation.** Lit., "according to revelation." This is not inconsistent with the belief that Barnabas and Paul may have been sent to Jerusalem from Antioch to minister to the poor. The context would suggest that the revelation bore upon, and awoke or approved the purpose to consult the leaders at Jerusalem. In the view of some it may refer to the prophecy of Agabus (Acts xi. 20) which

led to the expedition. **and communicated unto them that gospel.** R.V., "and I laid before them the gospel." He did not act as one wishing to learn the gospel, but to lay before them the gospel which he habitually preached, that a clear understanding might be reached. **but privately.** This consultation was not before the whole church, Paul wishing to know the mind only of the leaders, and perhaps, wisely, to reach some conclusion with them before the voice of "false brethren" should be heard. It seems impossible that the sentence should mean, as some hold, that he first met the whole church, and then the leaders apart. **lest by any means . . . in vain.** This can hardly mean that the Apostle had any doubt about the truth of his gospel. But many events might occur to frustrate his work—if the leaders proved hostile to it; and this consultation would prevent them from occurring. Zahn suggests that these words represent the question as Paul put it to the leaders,—"Do you hold that I have laboured in vain?"—expecting the negative answer, which he received.

3. The following sentence (vers. 3–5) is one of the most difficult to explain grammatically. It can only be understood by realizing that as he dictates it, the Apostle recalls and feels intensely not only the stress of that past crisis, but the immeasurable importance of the matter which was then at stake, and which has now been revived among the churches of Galatia to their unspeakable danger and his own distress of soul. For instance, the abrupt reference to Titus implies between vers. 2 and 3 a rush of thought towards the triumphant issue of that consultation (ver. 5). That triumph

is proved by the fact that Titus was not compelled to come under the Jewish law in order to be in fellowship with those "of repute." Whether any attempt was made to insist on his circumcision is not clear, and is much disputed among interpreters. Perhaps this personal question was not even raised by the authorities of the Jerusalem church, and that would prove their sympathy with Paul's gospel to have been complete. If this epistle was written before the Council at Jerusalem, the case of Timothy (Acts xvi. 1 ff.) had not yet occurred.

3. **Titus.** On Paul's close relations with Titus, see 2 Cor. vii., viii., xii. 18; Tit. i. 4.

4. Why, then, did Paul hold that consultation (ver. 2)? Because he had discovered, perhaps both at Antioch and certainly at Jerusalem, that certain men, called **false brethren,** were working in subtle ways to impose the Jewish law on believers in Christ. (1) They intruded deceitfully; (2) they sought proof that Jewish Christians were consorting with Gentile Christians (**spy out our liberty**); (3) their purpose was to create an agitation which would result in enforcing the Jewish law upon all Christians (**bring us into bondage**).

5. **by subjection.** R.V., "in the way of subjection." It would seem that Paul had unmasked these men, and in spite of their efforts to use the authority of "the pillars" to crush him and destroy "liberty in Christ," he had persistently and successfully withstood them. **with you.** If this visit to Jerusalem took place after Paul's first visit to the Galatians (identifying it with Acts xv. 1 ff. instead of Acts xi. 25), then he means that he was thinking definitely of his converts in Galatia, and fighting for them specially at Jerusalem. But if the position

here taken is true, then "with you" means "with you as Gentiles," *i.e.* "with all Gentiles, and therefore with you."

(*b*) Result of interview (vers. 6–10).

6 But of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person: for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference
7 added nothing to me: but contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto
8 me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (for he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward
9 the Gentiles;) and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they
10 unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

In the second section of this third paragraph the Apostle returns to state the result of his consultation with those "of repute." (1) He asserts (still negatively) that they added nothing to his conception of the gospel (ver. 6); (2) they arranged for a division of labour (vers. 7–9); (3) and in view of that division they asked of him one practical favour (ver. 10).

6. **But . . . somewhat.** R.V., "But from those who were (*m.* are) reputed to be somewhat." Opinions differ as to whether Paul refers to the primary apostles with a touch of scorn (cf. vers. 2, 6, 9; also 2 Cor. xi. 5, xii. 11). His position

was delicate, for he must at once assert his own authority as equal to them, and yet recognize their authority as most high and most real. He must resist those who exalt them and depreciate himself. The margin of R.V. would indicate that their "repute" or authority is recognized by him as a permanent fact. And yet it is not a matter depending on outward circumstances, or limited to one course of experience, such as theirs had been. Behind these parenthetic clauses there is a complex of thought and emotion impossible to disentangle. Different commentators catch various glimpses of it. It is hard to doubt, however, that the whole contrast between the origin of their authority (they *were* with Jesus), and his who had persecuted the Church, is constantly colouring the entire discussion. It makes no difference to Paul what they had been in the past. The Divine will is not limited to one way of appointing an apostle. (Cf. Rom. ii. 11; Eph. vi. 9; Col. iii. 25; Acts x. 34; Jas. ii. 9.) **added nothing to me.** R.V., "imparted nothing to me." They gave him no fresh insight into the essential nature of the gospel.

7, 8. The outstanding facts were seen in that conference to be, that both Peter and Paul had been winning men to the faith of Christ; that Peter had been successful among Jews, and Paul among Gentiles; and that it was God Himself who had **wrought** with and through each of them. Throughout the disputes of the apostolic Church the evident act of God in the conversion of men to Christ was always treated as final (cf. Acts viii. 14–16, xi. 18).

9. Hence there followed a scene full of the beauty of the Divine grace. "They who were reputed to be pillars" (R.V.), viz. James and Peter

(Cephas) and John, sealed an agreement by giving **the right hands of fellowship** to Barnabas and Paul. It was agreed that they should continue the plan which had already received the blessing of God, each group specializing in the work among those with whom they were already successful.

10. The Apostle was always deeply concerned with the work of helping the destitute Christians at Jerusalem. No full and clear explanation of this continued distress has been yet given. (Cf. Acts xi. 27, 30, xxiv. 17; also Rom. xv. 2, 5, 6; 1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4; 2 Cor. viii., ix.) Ramsay, referring this verse to the visit of Acts xi. 27, translates as follows: "Only (they instructed me) to remember permanently the poor, which I then made it my object to do."

Gal. ii. 11–14.

6. THE THREATENED DEFECTION OF PETER.

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to
12 the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came before James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated him-
13 self, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimula-
14 tion. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

In the fourth and last paragraph of Paul's autobiographic defence he finally disposes of the sug-

gestion that in order to "please men" (cf. i. 10) he had compromised among the authorities at Jerusalem that gospel which he had preached in far-off Galatia. He describes a scene at Antioch which may have occurred very soon after the agreement set forth in the preceding verses (7–9). That agreement had not thoroughly cleared the air. The plan that Peter and Paul should work among Jews and Gentiles respectively had left undecided the question as to the mutual communion of Gentile and Jewish believers in a church like this at Antioch. Hence Peter, on this visit to Antioch, fell into inconsistency. At first he accepted the situation and consorted, as he found Paul and Barnabas and other Jews consorting, with Gentile Christians in social life. But he was thrown into confusion of conscience when a group of strict men came from Jerusalem, and professing to speak with the authority of James, protested that he was going too far. As a matter of fact they had no authority to make this protest (Acts xv. 25), but their tone made Peter afraid. He *began* to withdraw from the fellowship of the Gentiles (perhaps from the Agape or communion feast of the church), and his example caused others to withdraw. The pressure of authority was so great that "even Barnabas," that staunch fellow-worker of Paul, was moved by it.

11. Paul confronted Cephas personally, and not through any conference of authorities, because the latter stood so plainly "condemned" (R.V.). It was not a matter for ecclesiastical arrangement (as in ver. 9), but for straight dealing with an individual conscience in its confusion and guilt.

12. **he did eat.** Lit., "he was eating." This

may not imply that he went freely into their homes, but that he took part with them in the frequent meals at which the members of the Church assembled to celebrate their joyous unity (Acts ii. 46, 47; 1 Cor. xi. 20 ff.). **he withdrew and separated.** There was no sudden act. He gradually drew back as the fear pressed upon him.

13. **dissembled, dissimulation.** Lit., "practised hypocrisy." This hypocrisy was an attempt to hide his fellowship with Gentiles from the visitors from Jerusalem. Fear drove him to avoid an unpleasant encounter with them without disowning publicly the conduct which offended them. Paul may have watched this with silent indignation till the climax was reached, when on a definite occasion Barnabas was drawn away.

14[a]. Then Paul seized a suitable occasion and confronted Peter with the devious nature of his conduct. **the truth of the gospel** (cf. ver. 5). Peter was not acting upon what he knew to be the true nature of the gospel. He had left the straight path of right conduct towards the Gentiles, as his own faith in the free grace of God opened it up before him. **before them all.** This may mean the assembled church. But the connection with ver. 13 and the tone of the argument which follows would rather indicate that only the Jewish Christians who were involved in this movement were present.

Gal. ii. 14[b]–21.

7. PAUL'S SUMMARY OF HIS ARGUMENT WITH PETER.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them

all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of
Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the
15 Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by
16 nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a
man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the
faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus
Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ,
and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the
17 law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to
be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners,
is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.
18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make
19 myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to
20 the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with
Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth
in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by
the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave
21 himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God:
for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead
in vain.

The second half of this fourth paragraph comprises Paul's argument and protest against the conduct of Peter and the other Jewish Christians. It is not necessary to believe that the Apostle has reproduced the very language which he used. He recalls the substance, and much perhaps of the phraseology; but the original speech may well have been longer and varied by conversational interruptions. The line of argument may be summarized under the following points: (1) Peter is compelling Gentile believers to adopt the Jewish law, whereas his own conduct shows that he did not believe it to be obligatory (ver. 14^{b}); (2) the Jewish Christians had put their faith in Christ because the law had failed to give what

Christ does give, namely, justification or a righteous relationship with God (vers. 15, 16); (3) to go back to the law now would mean that faith in Christ had made them sinners, which is not to be thought of (ver. 17); (4) on the contrary, to go back to the law would mean the loss of that life unto God which they now had, and resumption of the status of transgressors (vers. 18, 19); (5) Paul (and all true believers) are living in a union with Christ by faith in Him, which means that they are dead to the claims of "the law." This wonderful grace of God, and the meaning of Christ's death, would be rendered void if they abandoned that faith (vers. 20, 21).

14[b]. **why compellest thou.** The moral authority of the leaders would have Gentile Christians to come under the law of circumcision. Paul must have seen the distress of those Gentiles, and seen also that if this policy were carried out Christianity would be reduced to a mere Jewish sect.

15. **sinners of the Gentiles** (cf. Luke vi. 32, 33 with Matt. v. 47, and Matt. xxvi. 45 with Luke xviii. 32). He could hardly have used this phrase with grace if Gentiles were present. It expressed the traditional contempt of the Jews for the non-Jewish world. Paul, of course, uses it here with a touch of sarcasm, for all present, while Jews by birth, had confessed themselves sinners in accepting Christ.

16. **by the works of the law.** R.V. *margin*, "by works of law." **but by the faith of Jesus Christ.** Better—"but only through faith in Jesus Christ." The fundamental contrast of two fundamental principles is stated here. Righteousness or

justification is the aim of both. But according to one method it rises out of law, as a man by labour fulfills the law; according to the other, it descends into a man's life through faith in Christ from the will of God. Paul views them as warring principles, fatal to one another. The one is legalism; the other is evangel-ism, a gift from God. The one has been proved false and delusive ("knowing that a man," etc.); the other is a refuge and deliverance from it, and a joyous fact. **for by the works**, etc. A free citation of Ps. cxliii. 2 (cf. same quotation in Rom. iii. 20).

17, 18, 19. These very difficult verses must be read as if we stood in that group of disputants. Paul is looking at Peter and Barnabas and the emissaries "from James." They all are acting *as if* the Jewish law were for them the will of God, to ignore which is sin. By their present conduct they are accusing Paul and their own past bearing towards Gentile Christians of being sinful before God. He compels them to confront their own conduct in its inner meaning.

(1) Ver. 17. If by seeking justification through Christ we have to take our place beside the Gentiles as "sinners" (cf. ver. 15), disowning henceforth the authority of the Jewish law, has not Christ put us into a sinful relation to that law, and thus become a minister of sin? Most emphatically, No!

(2) Ver. 18. For, on the contrary, if I were to go back under the law—as you have done—and build up over me its authority—which I had torn down—I would then constitute myself a transgressor. (The change to the first pers. sing. "I" instead of "we" is a delicate courtesy. For they

had done what he now denounces, and he makes the rebuke at once more polite and more telling by saying, "If I were to do this, the result would be as follows.") "Either we are not justified by Christ, or we are not justified by the law"—Luther.

(3) Ver. 19. "For I through law died unto law, that I might live unto God"—R.V. *margin*. The paradox can only be explained by the Atonement, which Paul states in terms of a living experience in ver. 20. Once he was under "law," a tyrant principle which gave no righteousness and no peace. Now he lives consciously and freely unto God (cf. Rom. vi. 12). The fact of a death of some kind is proved by the fulness and power and divine quality of the new life which is now really his. A man puts his trust in Christ, and so dies to "law," not to get rid of God and God's will, but that he may be most truly bound over to His service in heart and will.

20. The best translation is that of R.V. *margin* —"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." (1) To enthrone Christ is to dethrone the law. The man in whom Christ lives so completely that he is unconscious of a separate personality has really died out of that other world or form of life in which the principle of law ruled over him, in his conscious separation from God, and held him bound in defeat and guilt (cf. Rom. vii. 5, 9–11). (2) There is a living relation between this actual experience of Paul and the death of Christ on the cross. The relation is so real, its effect so marvellous, that the Apostle is able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ," "He gave

Himself up for me." The relation is not explained here (cf. Gal. iii. 10–13). R.V., "and that life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me." The new life of conscious union with God in Christ is on his side conditioned only by one fact, the fact of his personal trust in Christ. The claims of the law are dead. He is under no obligation to consider the ancient legal enactments as if they now affected his standing before God. That standing is "apart from the law." Not that there is no righteousness in the Christian life, but it comes in a new way out of a new spirit (Gal. v. 22). Not that the Christian spirit is indifferent to right and wrong; but that the meaning of right and wrong rises out of a new set of relations and bears with a new significance upon the will of the man who is one with Christ, the Son of God. This wonderful utterance, one of the greatest words in all the history of religious experience, rises, peak-like, above the range of argument. But its full meaning, as Paul used it, is understood in relation to the fight for liberty from that law, whose tyranny was darkening the conscience of Peter and the other Jewish Christians.

21. **I do not frustrate.** R.V., "I do not make void the grace of God." Elsewhere (Rom. iv. 4, 5) he shows that the principle of law which would make God a debtor to man, and the principle of grace which would make man a debtor to God even for the pardon of sin, are hostile to one another. The one must turn the other into vanity. They cannot be mingled as Peter and the rest were trying to do. Paul, for his part, will not treat the grace of God as if it

were of no account. **for if . . . in vain.** R.V., "through the law . . . for nought." If law is the source of righteousness, then the death of Christ, the righteous and deathless One, had no meaning. In that case He died without reason—"gratuitously" (Lightfoot). It is always assumed in the N.T. that death had no power over Christ, the sinless One, as it has over sinners. His dying must, therefore, have had a meaning beyond Himself, and that meaning is found in the Atonement, the bringing of pardon to men.

Thus Paul ends his self-defence, and the defence of his apostolic authority. He has proved the three main points which the Jewish enemies of his gospel disputed, viz.: (1) that he was directly appointed by God, as the original apostles were; (2) that he had never made any compromise to "please men," but had openly maintained his gospel, even against the inconsistent conduct of Peter; (3) that the recognized leaders or "pillars" really agreed with him, and neither themselves preached any other gospel among those of the circumcision, nor insisted that he should change his preaching. Their personal faith in Christ was identical with his, their message with his message.

PART II. THE CENTRAL ARGUMENT—THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

(Gal. iii. 1–v. 12.)

In this central portion of the epistle we find Paul dealing directly with the fundamental principles of the gospel as he had preached and would still preach it to the Galatians, as to all other men, whether Jews or Gentiles. He does not conduct a systematic argument. Rather "Paul's arguments here have to a certain extent the character of reminiscences, for they are designed to rouse memories among his readers."[1] The exclamation "O foolish Galatians" follows from the previous paragraph. If Paul's argument face to face with Peter was sound, and if it represented the heart of the message which he had preached to the Galatians; if, further, Peter and the rest were confessedly wrong to attempt a compromise between the principles of the gospel and the law, then the Galatians would be indeed foolish to listen to any allurements offered in name of "law." But the exclamation leads on also to the further statement of the case, which continues in a series of paragraphs surcharged with vehement emotion down to chap. v. 12. Throughout the successive arguments we must try to imagine the experience of the Galatians whom he addresses, and to overhear, as it were, the arguments of those who are undermining their faith in the gospel. The fundamental paragraphs set before us the beginnings of

[1] Ramsay's *Historical Commentary*, p. 329.

the principles of law and of faith, the divergent effects of these in determining the relations of men to God, the fact that the cross of Christ has done away with law and established faith for ever, that nevertheless "law" had a real function and value in preparing for Christ and faith, and finally, that the Galatians would be forsaking the higher for the lower, the permanent for the temporary, the spiritual for the fleshly, freedom for bondage, the endowment of the Spirit for the inevitable indebtedness to the law, if they allowed themselves the fatal experiment of assuming the obligations implied in circumcision. They would simply have "fallen away from grace" and be "severed from Christ."

Gal. iii. 1-5.

1. THE GALATIANS STULTIFYING THEMSELVES.

1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye
should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ
2 hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This
only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the
3 works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so
foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made
4 perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in
5 vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth
to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth
he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

This paragraph consists of a series of abrupt challenging questions addressed to the Galatians. The Apostle feels the power of the argument which he has just closed, and turns to these

Churches as one who is astonished, perplexed, and grieved that their minds had become confused as to the principles at stake. Each question bears directly upon their own experience of the Gospel of Christ, which ought to have prevented them from being confused and misled by the arguments of the Judaizers among them.

1. **O foolish Galatians.** An exclamation partly of condemnation and partly of pity. They seem to him to have acted unreasonably, without "nous" or sound wisdom. The attempt of some commentators, on the supposition that these Galatians were Celts, to find here an illusion to Celtic waywardness or witlessness, is just neither to the historic facts (if these churches were in South Galatia) nor to the Celtic temperament. On Pauline use of this word, cf. Rom. i. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 9; Tit. iii. 3. **that . . . truth.** Omitted in R.V. **who hath bewitched you.** R.V., "did bewitch." These Churches act as if they had been fascinated, swept out of the control of their reason, by the spell of "an evil eye." **before whose eyes . . . among you.** R.V., "openly set forth crucified." The word for "set forth" is, Lightfoot says, "the common word to describe all public notices or proclamations." The preaching of Paul had vividly described the crucifixion of Christ as an event of permanent power. He had proclaimed it as an act of God's government which concerned all men, and to whose authority all must give heed. Who had drawn away their gaze from that proclamation and obscured its meaning for them?

2. **learn of you.** R.V., "learn from you." This is one of the cardinal points in the whole argument. (Cf. ver. 14; also iv. 6, 29, v. 16 ff.) They had re-

ceived the Spirit unmistakably and confessedly. The signs of His power were manifest among them (ver. 5). And the Apostle, as it were, stakes all ("this only would I learn") on this one question, whether it was on the principle of law, or through that message which both demanded and evoked their faith, that the Divine life thus entered into their lives. Paul assumes in various passages that all confessed Christians have the Spirit. It is not a doctrinal deduction, but an observed fact of experience (cf. Rom. viii. 2–16; 1 Cor. xii. 13; 2 Cor. i. 21 f.; Eph. i. 13 f.).

3. Repeating the word about their folly, he attacks an excuse which he seems to overhear their false teachers suggesting. "Faith" is necessary as a preliminary step, they seemed to say, but law is needed for perfection or a real adult life. They were accustomed to the idea of stages in the spiritual life, from mystic religions around them, and it might well be a "bewitching" or fascinating idea to suggest that Paul had given these Gentiles the first steps of initiation, but that full and perfect illumination was to be found in other doctrines than his! From Rom. ii. 20 it would appear that the Jews generally took a superior tone towards Gentiles, treating them not as adults (perfect) but as babes. **in the flesh.** These mystic religions taught asceticism, drew the painful treatment of the body into their requirements for "perfection." Perhaps circumcision might be so described and recommended.

4. Paul meets this subtle suggestion with a counter challenge. They had suffered severe persecution (cf. Acts xiii. 50, 51, xiv. 1–22; 2 Tim. iii. 11). Was it all for nought? **if it be yet in**

vain. R.V., "if it be indeed in vain." Pathetic words from the heart. He is uncertain how far they have gone back, but cannot allow himself to believe that his worst fears (cf. iv. 8–11) are justified.

5. He returns to their actual possession of the Spirit (ver. 2) for comfort of his fears and challenge of their intelligence. God still "supplies" (R.V.) the Spirit, and shows miraculous powers among them—and they know full well that this comes not from their legal obedience but from their faith.

6. **it was accounted** (*margin* imputed). R.V., "it was reckoned." Paul, as it were, hears the one answer to all his questions—"By faith." And he replies—"Yes, by such faith as Abraham had" (Gen. xv. 6 (Septuagint). Cf. Rom. iv. 3; Jas. ii. 23).

Gal. iii. 6–9.

2. THE LAW OF FAITH EXEMPLIFIED BY ABRAHAM.

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to
7 him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they
which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.
8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the
heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto
9 Abraham, saying, *In thee shall all nations be blessed.* So
then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful
Abraham.

The two fundamental facts on which the argument here is based are: (1) that God made a promise to Abraham to the effect that through him a Divine blessing should be inherited by "all the

nations" (but how could people "inherit" except from an ancestor?); (2) that this promise has been fulfilled; for as a matter of fact the blessing of God has come upon all who enter into the life of faith towards Jesus Christ. Evidently there are two further points to be established before the full significance of these facts can be made clear. The *first* is that what believers in Christ enjoy is a supreme gift of God, the very blessing promised through Abraham to all nations. The *second* is that a relation of continuity can be traced between the faith of Abraham and that of Christian believers. These are discussed in the following paragraph (vers. 15–22), but they must be kept in mind that we may appreciate the direction of thought in this paragraph (vers. 7–14).

7. **Know ye therefore.** Whether we read it thus or in the present tense, "Ye know therefore," there is implied an appeal to facts which the Galatians have already been taught, the full significance of which they have not grasped. **of faith.** Faith is not a single act but a permanent attitude of the whole person towards its object. From that attitude the life flows, through it all relations are determined. Cf. the Johannine phrase "of the truth" (1 John iii. 19). "Those of faith" here means, those whose position before God is fixed by their faith; they are justified, they stand as righteous before Him. **the same.** The word is very emphatic, meaning "these and none others." Even those who are descended from Abraham according to the flesh are excluded if they have not faith. **children of Abraham.** R.V., "sons" (cf. Matt. iii. 9; John viii. 33–59). "Paul's thought is this: the adopted heir succeeds to the religious

obligations and position of the deceased. Conversely, he who succeeds to the religious position of any man is his son . . . He who succeeds to the faith of Abraham is the son of Abraham" (Ramsay, *Ep. to Galatians*, p. 341).

8. **And the Scripture.** The personification of the written word was not uncommon among the Jews, but this instance goes beyond the usual formulæ of reference to the O.T. As if the sacred writing were in each part of it a living being, able to "foresee" the purpose of God (cf. the great passage, Heb. iv. 12, 13, as it arises out of the preceding O.T. quotation). **And** has the force of "moreover," not continuing but varying the point of view from ver. 7. **would justify.** R.V. *margin*, "justifieth." It is God's permanent principle of action. **the heathen.** R.V., "Gentiles." The true translation is that of the R.V. *margin*, "nations," as Paul is thinking of the Divine purpose towards all peoples, and not towards the Gentiles as distinguished from the Jews. **preached before the gospel.** R.V., "preached the gospel beforehand." When God attached His blessing to the act of faith, He began the history of the gospel, whose consummation has been reached in Christ. Does it follow that wheresoever among men we find any measure of "faith" there we may expect to find a corresponding measure of "the blessing"? **all nations.** R.V., "all the nations." The quotation is a fusion of two passages—Gen. xii. 3 and xviii. 18. Even some Jewish commentators had seen that this blessing must be something spiritual, for "all the nations" could not inherit the promised land. Their imagination was lifted by the great and striking words to conceive of some

inheritance from God through Abraham which all peoples might possess.

9. This is not a mere repetition of ver. 7. There it is "sonship" which is asserted; here it is the possession of a common boon, "the blessing." The point to be proved is that Christians are the only true "sons of Abraham." It can be proved only by their possession of "the blessing" which was promised to all nations in him. But since the blessing which he enjoyed was that of righteousness, or justification (ver. 6) through faith, those who now are likewise justified by faith do actually share his blessing.

Gal. iii. 10-14.

3. THE CURSE OF THE LAW, AND THE REDEEMER.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the
curse: for it is written, *Cursed is every one that continueth*
not in all things which are written in the book of the law to
11 *do them.* But that no man is justified by the law in the
sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.
12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them
13 shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the
curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written,
14 *Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree*: that the
blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through
Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the
Spirit through faith.

The Apostle is dealing with those who maintain that the law is still supreme even over believers, and that only men who obey it are served heirs to

the covenant of Abraham, even though they accept Jesus as Messiah and Saviour. Paul now turns to deal them a sudden and shattering blow. Two facts are set down; first, that the law brings only a curse to them who accept its authority (and this by its very nature as law, ver. 21); second, that Christ by His death has at once removed this curse from those who were under the law, and opened another fountainhead from which "the blessing of Abraham" has flowed out upon the nations.

10. Those who get their standing "from works of law" instead of "from faith" stand not under a blessing, but "under a curse." In support of this terrific word the Apostle cites in this and the two following verses three O.T. passages: (1) In ver. 10 from Deut. xxvii. 26 where these words form the climax and summary of the "curses" pronounced from Mount Ebal. The Apostle varies the quotation "in the book of the law," instead of "the words of this law," to make the "curse" apply to all who break any part of the whole law and not only those portions recited in the special *résumé* given on Mount Ebal (Deut. xxvii. 15–25). The writer assumes that no one can claim to have fulfilled the whole law. Therefore no one is free of "the curse." (Cf. James ii. 10.) (2) In ver. 11. Here a passage is cited (cf. Rom. i. 17; Heb. x. 38) to prove that even in O.T. faith is recognized as the ground of justification. The words of Habakkuk ii. 4 in the Hebrew referred to the deliverance of the Jews from the power of their Chaldean enemies and invaders, so that "the righteous shall live by his faithfulness." The Septuagint has two readings: "my righteous one shall live by faith," or "faithfulness," and "the

righteous man shall live by my faithfulness." (3) In ver. 12. Quoting Lev. xviii. 5 the Apostle insists that the words "he that doeth them (viz., my statutes and my judgments) shall live in them," imply that a strict obedience is demanded as the condition of life; and this is the opposite principle to that of "faith." The legal principle demanding flawless personal righteousness is inwardly and essentially diverse from the principle of grace, conferring righteousness through faith.

13, 14. In these two verses the central objective or historical fact of the Christian gospel, and the central subjective or experienced result of that fact, are stated in relation to the law and its desolate effect. (1) The "curse of the law," which rested on all because all had failed, has been removed. The Apostle is thinking primarily of the Jews who had groaned so long under the intolerable burden of the legal principle (cf. Rom. vii. 9, 24); and the word "redeemed" implies that they have been bought out of slavery. **being made a curse for us.** R.V., "having become." The death of Christ had innumerable relations, which all the theories of the Atonement have not exhausted. The Apostle here sets it in relation to the very real "curse of the law." Christ, who had fulfilled the law and personally stood outside its curse, by the very mode of His death came under that curse. He "became a curse for us"—that is, for those who were "of the law," and therefore in bondage and forlorn. This violent phrase must be compared with 2 Cor. v. 21. It is supported by an appeal to "the law" itself in Deut. xxi. 23. In this quotation Paul "instinctively omits" the words "by God" which occur in

that passage. There can be no doubt that every strict Jew would have admitted the full force of this quotation. Perhaps the rulers had betrayed Jesus to the Romans for the express purpose of extinguishing faith in His claims by the force of that very law. Paul here turns the argument against them. Christ did come under that dread curse of the law, but He did so "for us." (2) The transcendent purpose of that awful transaction was this, that (R.V.) "upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus." By taking on Himself with redemptive force the curse of the law, He reopened the sealed fountain, he threw human relations with God back upon the conditions established by the Divine Grace with Abraham, and with mankind in him. **that we . . . through faith.** The effect of that transaction is an actual thing. Men have really received the supreme boon, the uttermost blessing possible in this world, the gift in their own hearts and lives of the very Spirit of God. (cf. iii. 2, 3, 5, v. 16 ff.). That is the glorious form in which the promise to Abraham (ver. 8) has been fulfilled to Jew and Gentile alike.

Paul has now answered for them the challenging question of ver. 2. Christ's relation to the law and its curse has made it possible for the Galatians to receive the Spirit apart from law through obedience to the gospel of faith.

Gal. iii. 15–22.

4. COVENANT AND PROMISE, LAW AND GOSPEL.

(*a*) Covenant and Promise (vers. 15–18).

15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be
but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man dis-
16 annulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his
seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to
seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is
17 Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was con-
firmed before God in Christ, the law, which was four
hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it
18 should make the promise of none effect. For if the inherit-
ance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God
gave it to Abraham by promise.

Paul has to meet an argument which it was open to his opponents to urge, viz., that as the law was given by God later than the promise it was superior to, might even supersede, it. (1) The whole subject has been viewed in the light of "sonship" (ver. 7) and "inheritance" (vers. 8, 14). These are facts common to humanity, and in most civilized communities distinct statutes define them in their mutual relations by public law. He will therefore appeal to human custom as it obtained among and was familiar to his Galatian readers. (2) As they knew, a man's will when it became a formal instrument for the purpose of legalizing the adoption of a son, named the conditions of his adoption and the kind and amount of his inheritance. (Sir William Ramsay has proved that in writing to the Galatians Paul cites the Greek law as it ob-

tained in that region at that time—*Historical Commentary on Galatians*, § xxxv.) (3) The covenant with Abraham partook of the nature of a will in that it determined the conditions of sonship and inheritance for the patriarch. (4) Those conditions were, therefore, unalterable and could not have been modified by the advent of "the law" centuries later. The promise could not be revoked, and hence the inheritance (which has now been realized by the Church of Christ) has no dependence upon fulfilment of the law, but is the overflow of that free grace which first spoke in the promise to Abraham.

15. **Brethren.** The stern tone of ver. 1 is suddenly abandoned. The heart of Paul has realized as he gazed into the glory of the promise and the inheritance, that the "middle wall of partition," which was the law (Eph. ii. 14, 15) has been broken down; both Jews and Gentiles, "we," are all sons of Abraham (cf. iv. 31, v. 1). **after the manner of men.** An appeal to human analogy, to the customs with which the Galatians were familiar. **covenant.** R.V. *margin*, "testament." **disannulleth.** R.V., "maketh it void."

16. The argument in this verse turns upon a point which is apt to carry no conviction to our modern minds. But it is a mistake to call it "Rabbinism," as if only Jewish scholars used this method. The search for deep meanings in grammatical structures and in fanciful derivations of words was practised even by the greatest of ancient philosophers, and was by no means confined to Jewish scholars. A man may be far in advance of his day in moral and spiritual insight,

while his methods of argument and exposition are those in use around him. So was it with the Apostle. **and to thy seed** (cf. Gen. xiii. 15, xvii. 8). It has been urged that Paul here appeals to a grammatical absurdity in that the Hebrew and Greek words for "seed" could not be used in the plural (seeds) to signify the individual descendants of a man. The Apostle, to whom both languages were native, must have known this. He is merely calling attention to the fact that the promises are made regarding "the seed," taken in a collective and unitary sense. But for him, as for some Jewish theologians, the Messiah or Christ sums up in Himself the race of Abraham, and he feels free to apply to Him what was first spoken of the whole people whose Head and Representative He has become. We ought, therefore, to admit that this argument, which is remote from our ways of thought, was no mere arbitrary fancy, but a legitimate piece of reasoning for the men of his day.

17. **in Christ.** These words are rightly omitted in R.V. **the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul.** R.V., "which came . . . doth not disannul." An instance of the looseness with which even in Scripture periods of time were often reckoned by the ancients. In Acts vii. 6 the bondage in Egypt is said to have lasted 400 years (cf. Ex. xii. 40, Gen. xv. 13). In the Septuagint version, Ex. xii. 40 is made to include the story of the patriarchs in Canaan. The Apostle here makes 430 years stretch from the promise made to Abraham down to the giving of the law of Moses.

18. **God gave it.** R.V., "God hath granted

it." The promise was a free act of God's grace and not the reward of merit. It had no relation, therefore, to the legal principle, the arrival of which did not and could not annul the permanent nature of that grant. Indeed, the inheritance (cf. ver. 14) from that unchangeable promise is now in the actual possession of men (Christian believers) as the outflow of that gift "to Abraham by promise."

(*b*) Law and Gospel (vers. 19–22).

19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because
of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the
promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the
20 hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of
21 one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises
of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given
which could have given life, verily righteousness should
22 have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded
all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ
might be given to them that believe.

There are two successive questions which the Apostle hears his more thoughtful readers, or his keen-witted opponents urging. (1) What was the function of the law? All were agreed that the law came from God. But it was hard to see what the Divine purpose had been in ordaining that great system, and Paul sets out to state it. His answer is that "it was added because of transgressions." It was, as it were, a form of interim administration. (2) But in that case did the law counteract the promise? By no means. Rather did it actually further the fulfilment of the promise,

and lead up to the faith of Jesus Christ. By closing finally and forever the door by which men might try to force a personally merited entrance into life, it concentrated attention ("shut up unto the faith") upon the door which grace has opened and which only faith can enter.

19. **Wherefore then serveth the law?** R.V., "What then is the law?"—the correct translation. **It was added because of transgressions,** not as a modification of the promise (cf. ver. 15), but as a fresh mode of dealing with the situation. The meaning of the phrase "because of transgressions" has been much disputed. There is no real need of the dispute. For it is in itself a simple affirmation that the law was given because as a fact transgressions were there. What relation it had to these transgressions is only to be learned later (vers. 22, 23). **and it was . . . mediator.** R.V., "Through angels by the hand of a mediator." (Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 2; Acts vii. 53; Heb. ii. 2.) The Jewish theologians had in the times of Christ built up an elaborate angelology, or doctrine of angels, from a very few hints in the O.T. The more distant and unapproachable they conceived Jehovah to be, the more did they feel the need of intermediate beings through whom He was supposed to act upon human life. The N.T. references to angels as mediators of Divine action are comparatively rare (except in the Revelation of St. John). The person of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit, as well as the close and direct action of God the Father, blotted out this need of angelic mediators, so far as man's faith and worship are concerned.

20. There are actually hundreds of differing

interpretations of this most obscure utterance. Nowadays no commentator speaks of it with any confidence. The points of difficulty are: (1) why we are reminded that a mediator deals not with one but (presumably) with two parties in a transaction; (2) why we are reminded that God is one; (3) why the latter statement is set in contrast with the former. Whatever were the hidden steps in the Apostle's mind, the outstanding fact to be emphasized is that it is the same God, **God is one,** who gave the promise directly, and later gave the law through a mediator.

21. In declaring that the coming of the law did not destroy the validity of the promise, the Apostle appeals to a general principle. What we are in search of is a way of attaining "life" or "righteousness." If a law had been given which had the power of conferring this, the promise would, of course, have faded away. Obedience to that law and not faith in the promised grace would have reigned over us.

22. **But the Scripture . . . under sin.** R.V., "Howbeit the Scripture hath shut up all things under sin." For "but" we had better translate "on the contrary," to bring out the full force of the adversative. **the Scripture.** Either the general effect of the O.T. (cf. citations in Rom. iii. 10–18) or, as Lightfoot holds, some particular passage like Ps. cxliii. 2 (cf. Gal. ii. 16) or Deut. xxvii. 26 (cf. Gal. iii. 10). **hath concluded,**—*i.e.* they are all shut up conclusively, without power of escape. The neuter "all things" must mean the whole race (cf. John vi. 37, R.V.).

The phrase in ver. 19 "because of transgressions" is now partially explained. The law

came to "shut them up"—that is, to make them aware that sin had complete control of their life, and that no hope for man could be found save in some act of Divine grace. When that grace came in Jesus Christ, the law was exposed both in its weakness (Rom. viii. 3) and in its ordained purpose (Rom. vii. 13).

Gal. iii. 23–29.

5. LAW AND FAITH—"TUTOR" AND CHRIST.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut
up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.
24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto
25 Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that
faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster,
26 For ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.
27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have
28 put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is
neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female:
29 for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's,
then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the
promise.

The use of the word for "shut up" in ver. 22 suggests the idea of a prison (ver. 23). But that immediately suggests that the warden in this instance was no mere gaoler, holding a man only for doom, but a moral supervisor and guide preparing for life. The law, as God's ordinance, by its very work of rebuke and revelation of sin prepared for the great Remover of sin, for the new principle under which righteousness should be brought in, namely, faith. With much energy and

passion the Apostle then summarizes the situation of those upon whom the great era of faith has come. They are free from control of the "tutor" which is "the law." They are sons of God, without distinction of race or sex or social condition. They are united in a new life, so intimately, so inwardly, that they all are as "one man." But if this is the effect of Christ upon them, then they can trace this new manhood back to Abraham in the continuous unfolding of God's will. They are spiritually descended from him, and their glorious condition is the real inheritance of that ancient promise made to him by God.

It is to be noted that, whereas in the preceding arguments attention has been fastened mainly upon the inheritance (faith, promise), in the following paragraphs it is the sonship which is under direct discussion.

23. **But before faith came.** R.V. *margin*, "the faith." In this and the following verses we have a good illustration of the way in which the word "faith" began its rich and varied history as a Christian term. It is referred to as (1) a general principle (vers. 23, 25), (2) a personal act (ver. 24, 26). It is easy to see how it would pass over into a name for the Christian religion, in which both belief and trust are united into a living faith, as the meeting-point of man's supreme need and God's supreme grace. **we were kept under.** R.V., "we were kept in ward under." **shut up unto.** Better to translate, "having been shut up unto," to bring out the fact that this was, as it were, the final and permanent effect of the law.

24. **was our schoolmaster.** R.V., "hath been our tutor." Neither of these terms exactly de-

scribes the function of the Greek "pedagogue" who was put in charge of the moral training of the child. He was not the teacher, nor a mere assistant of the teacher, but a guardian of his conduct. Thus the law had a limited, though most useful, place in the providential guidance of Israel "unto Christ."

25, 26. Perhaps there is a glance here at the suggestion of iii. 3. Perfection, the life of the full-grown man, is reached when faith is attained. The law is for a juvenile period of history. **children of God.** R.V., "sons of God." The deliberate use of the word for "sons" instead of "children" is meant to emphasize the point. It is not under the law but through faith that they have entered the liberty of sons who have passed out of the hands of the severe and restraining "pedagogue." If any verse in the N.T. can be said to express the "essence of Christianity" it is this ver. 26. It is not an abstract, theoretical summary of qualities. It is the description of that actual experience, that relationship with God, which has created, and is the fundamental constitutive fact in, a community of human beings.

27. **as have been baptized . . . have put on.** R.V., "as were baptized . . . did put on." In the act of baptism they did "all" enter into a new relation with Christ, which is doubly expressed by the phrases "into Christ" and "did put on Christ" (cf. Rom. vi. 3, 4).

28. **there is neither male nor female.** R.V., "there can be no male and female." This is more than a mere statement of fact that there are no distinctions of race or class in the Church of Christ. It is an emphatic assertion

that in the nature of things these distinctions have no place there. The unparalleled universality or liberty of the gospel shines out. The extremes of racial antagonism, of social separation, even the fundamental physical distinction of sex are ignored. That which lies deeper than all these—the human nature, the moral self, the spiritual being that is common to all—that is the material with which the gospel deals. But this universal force produces a new and ineffable form of unity. **ye are all**—in spite of these historical and physical distinctions—**one man in Christ Jesus.** Needless to say, this "unity" is at once a fact and an ideal. Like that royal freedom of the gospel, this Divine unity of the sons of God is one of those sublime forms of reality which can only be gradually realized by the human heart and the human will. (See Sir William Ramsay's *Historical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, § xl.)

29. The Apostle's eloquence and soaring imagination have not made him forget his argument. He still keeps the descent from Abraham in view, and here it appears again, to warm his heart and to daunt his opponents. For if men can become identified with Christ, so that they are "in Christ," have "put on Christ," are even "part of Christ," then they have become the "seed of Abraham," which Christ is (ver. 16). Once more let it be triumphantly said, "Ye Galatians are already the heirs, the actual possessors of that promise in which God bound Himself to bless all nations in Abraham. Ye are his true, because his spiritual, descendants."

Gal. iv. 1–7.

6. BOND SERVICE AND SONSHIP.

1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth
2 nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is
under tutors and governors until the time appointed of
3 the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in
4 bondage under the elements of the world: but when the
fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son,
5 made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them
that were under the law, that we might receive the
6 adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath
sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying,
7 Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant,
but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through
Christ.

In this passage, the climax of the course of argument begun at iii. 7, the Apostle begins characteristically by taking up the significant word "heirs" in iii. 29. He applies to the case before him the law of minors which seems to have obtained among those whom he addresses. As, for the minor who is to receive a large inheritance, persons are appointed to care for him and for his property until the age is reached at which he attains full manhood and obtains full control of his possessions, so has it been for those under the law. They were "infants," held under control of crude principles until the set time had come. Then God sent His Son to set them free and bring them into the full rights of sonship. The full rights are held only by those in whose hearts the Spirit of the Son of God now dwells, awakening in them the full sense of trust and love towards their

Father. Such men are now at once sons and heirs not of Abraham, but of God Himself, and that through Christ and Christ alone.

1. The word **child** means here an "infant" in the legal sense, a minor. He is in the position of a servant or "a bondservant" (R.V.). He is completely under the rule of others, and has no power even over the property of which he is also legally the lord or owner.

2. **tutors and governors.** R.V., "guardians and stewards." There is no reference here to the "pedagogue" of the preceding paragraph (iii. 24, 25). In the Syrian Law-book, which Sir Wm. Ramsay believes to describe in this matter the statute law at this time obtaining in South Galatia—"a child is subject to an Epitropos ('guardian') up to fourteen, . . . but the practical management of the property remains in the hands of a curator ('steward') till the ward reaches the age of twenty-five" (*Ep. to Gal.*, p. 393).

3. **elements of the world.** R.V., "rudiments of the world." He boldly asserts that even the Jews had been in the position of minors, under the control of regulations and principles which, not without scorn, he calls "rudiments of the world." The word is used in Heb. v. 12 for the elements, the first steps, as it were, in Christian instruction; and in 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12 for the elements of the physical universe. In Col. ii. 8, 20 it is used as here for elementary religious teachings which prescribe formal rules of conduct and of worship, and are "of the world," limited, material, and external. That is a state of bondage, for the human soul—"held in bondage" (R.V.).

4, 5. This great utterance, like Phil. ii. 5–11,

2 Cor. viii. 9, and others, presupposes the familiarity of his readers with the fact of the Incarnation, which the writer neither defends nor expounds in this place. He simply appeals to it to illuminate the greatness of the deliverance from age-long bondage which Christ had brought to mankind. **the fulness of time.** The primary reference is to the words of ver. 2—"the time appointed." The time was ripe when the legal principle had been fully tried out, when alike its positive work in the revelation of God's holy will, and its negative work in the exposure of man's impotence, had been accomplished. **God sent forth his Son.** Beyond all question this implies that the Son lived with God ere He was "sent forth" (cf. Rom. viii. 3). **made of a woman, made under the law.** R.V., "born of a woman, born under the law." There is, of course, no reference here to the virgin-birth of Jesus. The words mean that He became human, entered into the conditions of human experience. That experience included the burden of the legal principle under which human nature was in bondage. **to redeem.** R.V., "that He might redeem." To Him the burden was no bondage. He undertook the task as a redeemer (cf. iii. 13). **adoption of sons.** Paul recognizes that all men are the "offspring" of God (Acts xvii. 28, 29) in the sense that we share His spiritual nature. But he always reserves (like his Master) the noble conception of sonship for those upon whom that change of status has come by which men enter into a relation with God which is one of intimacy and moral resemblance.

6. This new relation with God is marked and crowned by the fact that the very Spirit of His

Son dwells in the hearts of those who have become sons (cf. Eph. iii, 16, 17). A new consciousness has been awakened in us (R.V., "our hearts") towards God. The awful and holy and distant God has drawn so near and become so dear that love and confidence are poured out of those hearts and they break into the cry, "Abba, Father." This double exclamation unites the Aramaic word, which Jesus used, with its Greek equivalent, and expresses at once the intensity and the joy with which this supreme relationship with God is felt to be a fact by each individual.

7. Note the rapid change of the personal pronouns "them" and "we" in ver. 5; "ye" and "our" in ver. 6. In this verse the Apostle addresses the individual as if to set forth the deep personal experience and the glorious personal standing of each man. This verse is the climax of the whole argument. Abraham as well as the law have dropped out of sight. Each soul is face to face with God Himself, His son and His heir.

heir of God through Christ. R.V., "an heir through God."

Gal. iv. 8–11.

7. GOD OR "NO GODS"?

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto
9 them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, where-
10 unto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days.
11 and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

Having at much length discussed the general principles, the Apostle now returns to the personal aspects of the controversy in which he is engaged. He reminds them of their former dark condition when they, like the Jews, were in bondage. But their bondage was to beings who were not gods. And now, having come to the knowledge of God, why should they revert by the path of the Jewish law to their former bondage? Obedience to that law would reduce them again to formal observances, to the "weak and beggarly rudiments" from which they had been redeemed. And the Apostle views with dismay this possible destruction of all his labour of love among them.

8. **Howbeit . . . service.** R.V., "Howbeit at that time not knowing God ye were in bondage." The question which was left vague in the preceding discussion, whether Gentiles were in a similar position to the Jews, is now directly and clearly determined. They were also in bondage. **no gods.** There is no reason why this should not have been translated more literally "not gods." The Apostle held that the heathen were really worshipping demons (cf. 1 Cor. x. 20).

9. R.V., "But now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments (*margin*, elements), whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?" **to know God.** The Greek word here is different from that used in ver. 8. It implies more of intimacy and an element of spirituality, as when we distinguish between an acquaintance and a friend, or when we say, "Yes, I have met him, but can't say I know him." **or**

rather to be known of God. This makes their position and experience as Christians very solemn and any departure from it very serious. For in the real knowledge of God, it is God who has taken the first steps and made all the rest possible. It is an act and gift of God, to be received most humbly and guarded most reverently. **back again, over again.** These phrases show that in Paul's view Judaism and Heathenism rest on the same legal principle.

10. **times.** R.V., "seasons." This word refers to annual celebrations of a religious kind; **days** to the weekly celebrations, *e.g.*, of the Sabbath; **months** to monthly events like the new moon; and **years** to sacred years whether called "Sabbatical" or "jubilee" years (cf. Col. ii. 16).

Gal. iv. 12–20.

8. THE APOSTLE AND HIS CHILDREN.

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are:
13 ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how through
infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at
14 the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye
despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel
15 of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessed-
ness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been
possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and
16 have given them to me. Am I therefore become your
17 enemy, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect
you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye
18 might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected
always in a good thing, and not only when I am present
19 with you. My little children, of whom I travail in birth

20 again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

The course of thought in this paragraph is for us obscured by the fact that it contains allusions to events in the past relations of the Apostle to the Galatians, and allusions also to words or phrases used among them in the present controversy, concerning which we can only make more or less vague conjectures. The whole passage is full of emotion. Not the matters of doctrinal principle but those of personal relationship have leapt into view. As in all controversies on even the most vital subjects, so here, personal relations and considerations become involved with the discussion of fundamental difficulties. The Apostle is so sure of the truth, so sure of his own integrity and purity of aim, that he does not hesitate to throw human affection into the scales. He reminds them of their former generosity towards him (13, 14); their joy in his message and devotion to him personally (15); he repudiates the notion that he had become their enemy (16); he unmasks the real meaning of the sedulous attentions which they have received from their false teachers (17); he then pours out in affectionate phrases his longing to visit them, to have his anxieties removed and the old relations of confidence renewed (18–20). Only a man of deep feeling and loyal soul could have written like this.

12. The Apostle reminds them that he had given up Judaism and had become as a Gentile, standing before God in Christ simply as all men must stand. He pleads with them not to assume

the place he had abandoned, not to come under the law, but to remain, to continue to "be" as they had been. **ye have not injured me at all.** R.V., "Ye did me no wrong." These words should begin a new sentence, and be connected with the following verse. Paul here refers to his first coming among them, when they did him no injustice, but rather, in spite of difficulties, showed him great generosity.

13. **Ye know . . . flesh.** R.V., "But ye know that because of an infirmity of the flesh." It is clear from this that the Apostle's first visit to the Galatian churches was due to illness. (See Ramsay's *Ep. to Galatians,* xlvii. and xlviii.) **at the first.** R.V., "the first (*margin,* former) time." There is dispute among scholars as to whether this word means "when I formerly visited you," having made only one visit before this letter was written, or "on my first visit of the two which I have made" (see Introduction, p. 28).

14. **And my temptation which was in my flesh.** R.V., "And that which was a temptation to you in my flesh." Literally, "Your temptation in my flesh." Evidently the sickness was of a form which tempted them to despise and reject (literally, to spit out) the sufferer. If it was malarial fever, with its intermittent agues and splitting headaches, it would tend to make him a weak-looking object and no commanding leader of men. Incidentally, we may remark that if they did not despise him, that is a tribute not only to their insight and sympathy but to the heroic energy with which he fought the fell foe and pursued his work amid trembling weakness and fierce pain. (See Ramsay's *Ep. to Galatians,* xlviii., on "The thorn in the

flesh.") **but received me** (cf. 2 Cor. v. 20; Matt. x. 40–42). One cannot but feel that as the Galatians were reminded of the reverence with which they had treated Paul as a Divine messenger, some of them would think of those who in their ignorant amazement at his power called him and his companion by the names of heathen deities (Acts xiv. 11 ff.), and in fickleness soon stoned him.

15. **Where is then the blessedness ye spake of?** R.V., "Where then is that gratulation of yourselves (*margin*, of yours)?" They had rejoiced and exulted among themselves over him and his teachings—how and why had that spirit vanished? **your own eyes.** R.V., "your eyes." There is no reference here, as some have supposed, to any disease of the Apostle's eyes, which has perhaps been partly suggested by the Authorised Version. The emphasis, if any, would rather suggest the translation, "your very eyes." It is the strength of their devotion and self-sacrifice that he recalls with such enthusiasm.

16. This is a startling contrast with ver. 15. They are evidently being persuaded that he whom they had passionately loved is an enemy to their true interests.

17. **They zealously affect you.** R.V., "They zealously seek you." Another allusion to a word which their letter or messengers had used. They urged that his opponents took a great interest in them and paid them every attention. Paul points out that they do this **not well** (R.V., "in no good way"). Their real aim is clear to him and he states it bluntly—**yea, they would exclude you that ye might affect them.** R.V., "nay, they desire to shut you out, that ye may seek them."

This word "shut out" must ring in their ears along with the phrase "shut up unto" (cf. iii. 22, 23). From the real good to which the law had led them these defenders of the law would now exclude them. And the purpose was "that ye may seek them," *i.e.* that the Galatians, having lost their faith in the gospel, might "zealously seek" these Jewish teachers and accept their authority.

18, 19. There are mingled affection and regret and rebuke in this exclamation. He recalls how that, when he was "present with" them, he and they had indeed "zealously affected" or "sought" each other. Then their mutual interest had been in a good thing (R.V., "in a good matter"). Would that their zeal for him had remained (R.V., "at all times") the same! His yearning love breaks out into one of those expressions, characteristic of Paul, in which he applies the idea of parenthood to his relations with his converts — **my little children, of whom I travail in birth again.** R.V., "I am again in travail." His present dealings with them are to him like the agony of a mother!

20. This should be read as a new sentence. The thought is subtle and beautiful, like a parent's perplexed brooding. His agony (ver. 19) arises from his perplexity—**for I stand in doubt of you.** (R.V., "for I am perplexed about you.") If only he could visit them in person instead of having to be content with the hardness of this written remonstrance, his voice (or tone) would change, and the old love would well forth!

Gal. iv. 21.–v. 1.

9. MOUNT SINAI OR JERUSALEM ABOVE?

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear
22 the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons,
23 the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But
he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh;
24 but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things
are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one
from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which
25 is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and
answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage
26 with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free,
27 which is the mother of us all. For it is written, *Rejoice,*
thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou
that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more
28 *children than she which hath an husband.* Now we,
29 brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as
then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that
30 was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless
what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and
her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir
31 with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we
are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.
v. 1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath
made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke
of bondage.

This paragraph, like the previous references to the "curse" (iii. 13) and the "seed" (iii. 16), is an instance of one of those modes of argument which are called in general "Rabbinical," because they had been employed so freely by the Rabbis or theological scholars of Judaism, among whom Paul received a part of his training. Whereas in

those passages the particular method had consisted in a legal interpretation of the death of Christ (iii. 13), and a grammatical interpretation of a certain prophecy to make it apply to Christ (iii. 16), here the method is the *allegorical* interpretation of a passage of history. The interpretation of the Old Testament by allegory had many forms among the Rabbis, and Paul must have been trained in their application.

In the passage before us it may not be rash to say that he may be once more meeting an argument used by the Judaizers, whether reported to him by letter or by the mouth of messengers. His well-known emphasis on the faith of Abraham, and on the idea that all Christian believers are "sons of Abraham," may have led to an undermining argument. 'Abraham has other descendants than those who come from Isaac, the son of Sarah, but the covenant of God was made with Abraham concerning Sarah and her descendants only. Even Ishmael, the son of Hagar, was not reckoned as the heir of the promise. How, then, can outsiders hope to be reckoned as co-heirs with the Jews unless they come under that covenant which referred only to Sarah and her actual offspring? There is the ultimate source of the law, they may have argued. Take it or leave it. But only by taking it can you come under the sweep of the covenant whose effect is always conditioned by submission to circumcision.' The Apostle countermines this argument by one whose force and subtilty those trained Jewish minds could not fail to recognize. We have two parallel stories. (1) There is Hagar, the handmaid, with her son after the flesh, who was born in bondage. That, says Paul, corresponds

to the covenant given from Mount Sinai, where her descendants still dwell, and that covenant is represented in the earthly Jerusalem, the fountainhead of them who are in bondage. (They are confessedly under that Sinaitic covenant, and Paul calls it bondage.) And they are persecuting the children of freedom as Ishmael persecuted Isaac (ver. 29). (2) There is Sarah, the freewoman, whose son was a child of promise, as we are (28), and born after the Spirit (29), even as we are. That corresponds to the heavenly, the ideal spiritual city (26), which is our mother, the fountain of the life of faith. We as children of the promise (28) are, of course, persecuted (29). It is certain that there can be no harmony or union of these two principles, or of those who obey them. If one is still the presecutor, that is yet the one doomed to be "cast out" (30). Our line of spiritual descent is not from the handmaid but the freewoman (31). Be sure, then, to hold that freedom fast and refuse to come under the law which is a veritable slavery of the soul, a "yoke of bondage" (v. 1).

21. **desire.** The Galatians, or some of them, seem to have been more than half persuaded by the Judaizers, so that they expressed the *wish* to become Jews, that they might be the better Christians.

22. **the one . . . a free woman.** R.V., "one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman." Throughout the R.V. has "handmaid" for "bondwoman," as the Greek word could be applied to a free maiden.

23. **after the flesh . . . by promise.** R.V., "through promise." The one son was born in the course of nature, there being here no reference to the idea of sin in Abraham's parentage. The

other son was born out of the course of nature, according to the promise of God (ver. 28; cf. Heb. xi. 11, 12), "after the spirit" (ver. 29).

24. **Which things are an allegory.** R.V., "contain an allegory." The word "allegory" means that statements are made which contain another or hidden meaning in addition to the obvious one. (See article on "Allegory" in Hastings' *Dict. of Bible.*) The theory was elaborately worked out by Jewish theologians and philosophers that the O.T. is full of these double meanings in its historic institutions, laws, and prophecies. Paul was trained to that method and used it on certain occasions (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10, x. 4; 2 Cor. iii. 13–16). Here the obvious meaning of the stories of Sarah and Hagar is not denied. But Paul believes that they can be shown to contain, in the plan of God, another and a true interpretation. The relations and history of these persons correspond to the relations of God and man under two covenants. **these are the two covenants.** R.V., "these women are two covenants." The covenants are viewed as "mothers" or sources of human experience. **which gendereth unto bondage, which is Agar.** R.V., "bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar." The Sinaitic covenant, like Hagar, produced an offspring in bondage. In the next verse a heavy blow is given to the Judaizers in the implied assertion that they who are representing the claims of that covenant are slaves (cf. Matt. xxiii. 37).

25. **For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia.** R.V. *margin*, "For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia." There is much difficulty about the

correct text here. The R.V. marginal reading seems best, if only because the other variations can be most easily explained as arising from it. But some think the whole clause is not due to Paul, but to a later interpolation; and the argument is certainly clearer without it. If we adopt the received text we must remember that "this Hagar" does not mean "this actual woman Hagar," but "this fact or principle which is represented by the woman Hagar." The notion that "Hagar" is used as a name for Sinai, or some portion of it, is without good support. But some interpreters understand it to mean, that "in Arabia the name Hagar signifies the Mount Sinai."

26. **which is the mother of us all.** R.V., "which is our mother." Cf. Isa. xlix.-lii. for the picture of a city as a mother. Polycarp (*Ep. Phil.* iii.) speaks of that "faith . . . which . . . is the mother of us all." The Jews had been taught to think that earthly objects are copies and symbols of things in heaven (cf. Heb. viii. 5, ix. 23), and pictured a Jerusalem in heaven which is the exact counterpart of the earthly city. Paul speaks of "the Jerusalem above" in contrast with "the present Jerusalem." He conceives of the former as the house of freedom, the city or community (Phil. iii. 20) in heaven whose rights are conferred by an act of grace upon men of faith (cf. Rev. iii. 12, xxi. 2, 10 ff.; Heb. xii. 18–29).

27. This is a most apt quotation from Isa. liv. 1, in which the prophet describes to the exiles the glories of Jerusalem after their return from captivity. The images of the City and the Bride are mingled throughout the passage and so

applicable both to Sarah, so long barren, and to the New Jerusalem, so fruitful of the children of freedom. And they, though few, shall outnumber the children of bondage,—is not that also in the Apostle's prophetic thought?

28. **we.** Most recent editors prefer to read "ye," as in R.V. *margin*. The Apostle once more emphasises with delicacy and firmness that they are "brethren" and true sons of Abraham, with Isaac.

29. **persecuted.** The Hebrew word in Gen. xxi. 9 means that Sarah saw the boy Ishmael "playing" (R.V. *margin*), not "mocking," still less "persecuting." But Paul here follows the Jewish tradition, and turns it against his opponents. It is the descendants of Abraham after the flesh (the Jews) who are now persecuting his children after the Spirit (the Christians).

30. Here, as at iii. 10, Paul slightly varies from the real words in quoting Gen. xxi. 10, to bring out his point without explanation. As it stands, his words reveal the extraordinary force of his conviction that the future history of God's kingdom is with the body of believers in Christ. There can be no compromise between the warring principles, law and grace, flesh and spirit, bondage and freedom. But the victory of "the son of the free-woman" is sure.

31. Perhaps there is a touch of scorn in these burning words, which must be read in close association with the next verse.

v. 1. **Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.** R.V., "With freedom (*margin*, or freedom) did Christ set us free." The Apostle dwells on the great fact

of "freedom," the mysterious quality of life which had eluded the passionate search of man for ages. It is here, within reach of men, and these Galatians are turning their backs on it. For the sake of this freedom, as an ultimate good of the soul, Christ has delivered "us"—Jew and Gentile alike (iii. 3, 8)—from a yoke of bondage. Paul urges the Galatians to stand against the forces that threaten to throw them again under that galling slavery.

Gal. v. 2-6.

10. FREEDOM OR BONDAGE?

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised,
3 Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to
every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the
4 whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, who-
soever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from
5 grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of
6 righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circum-
cision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith
which worketh by love.

Paul once more assumes a personal tone. Conscious at once of his responsibility and his influence, he asserts with great vigour that if men undertake deliberately the burden of the law as a way of salvation, they are rejecting Christ. Christ does not share this task of salvation with any. On the one hand the Apostle insists on the fact that the legal principle, if a man submits to it, is like an inexorable creditor. On the other hand Christ, who demands, indeed, a complete submission to His own power, grants the hope of righteousness to that faith which is fixed on Him and "works through love."

2. The first words arrest attention. It is no unknown and irresponsible person who deals with them, but Paul, whose conversion and whose apostolate they know and through whose preaching they had been awakened from dead things to serve the living God. **if ye be circumcised.** R.V., "if ye receive circumcision." Here and in the next verse the emphasis is upon the idea that Gentiles who deliberately undergo circumcision do so with a purpose, and their whole standing before God is determined by that fact. It is conversion to a principle. **Christ shall profit you nothing.** This is a tremendous utterance. These men must choose once for all between the final act of faith in Christ alone for salvation and the greatest, noblest religion of antiquity. For men who will not trust in Him as the Christ of God, His value disappears.

3. R.V., "Yea, I testify again." So solemn and conclusive is the statement of ver. 3 that the Apostle repeats it in a larger way in the next four verses. **that he is a debtor to do the whole law.** The legal principle demands that a man shall stand condemned unless he has perfected righteousness in his own will.

4. **Christ is become of no effect to you,** etc. R.V., "Ye are severed (Gr. brought to nought) from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace." They who would be justified in any other way have *then and there* been severed from Him and passed out of that universe of grace in which alone He reigns and in which He reigns alone.

5. **For we through the Spirit wait . . . by faith.** R.V., "For we through the Spirit by faith

wait." The righteousness in which true Christians live is received from God's Spirit in the act of faith. It is a gift for which men wait in lively and happy hope, not a personal achievement to be striven for as slaves strive in a thankless and hopeless task.

6. **faith which worketh by love.** R.V., "faith working (*margin*, wrought) through love." This great verse reveals the fact that no past condition of servitude has anything to do with a man's standing before God in Christ. Whether he had been a Jew or a Gentile matters not. It is the humanity in every man to which the gospel is addressed. **In Christ Jesus**—that is, in the new way of God with men at last established in Christ, God demands of them only that which all men can give —the living faith which is expressed in a life of love.

We must note well the occurrence in this passage of the three great words, faith, hope, and love (cf. Rom. v. 1–5 ; 1 Cor. xiii. ; Col. i. 4, 5 ; 1 Thess. i. 3). In Paul's writings these appear not as mere emotions, but as acts of will which are mutually related.

Gal. v. 7–12.

11. THE GALATIANS AND THEIR DISTURBERS.

7 Ye did run well ; who did hinder you that ye should not
8 obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that
9 calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.
10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded : but he that troubleth you shall bear
11 his judgment, whosoever he be. And I, brethren, if I yet

preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then
12 is the offence of the cross ceased. I would they were even
cut off which trouble you.

In this paragraph the Apostle is in the same mood or attitude as in chap. i. 6–10. The parallels are subtle, but distinct and interesting. In each paragraph there is a reference to "another" message to which the Galatians were attracted (i. 6 and v. 10), to those who were harassing them (i. 7 and v. 10), to a doom (i. 8, 9 and v. 10), to God who "called" them (i. 6 and v. 8), to his wonder at their change of mind (i. 6 and v. 7), to their unsettlement (i. 6 and v. 12), to the character of his own message (i. 8 and v. 11), to the question whether men were pleased with or offended with his message (i. 10 and v. 11). There is, however, a slight change of tone which is marked by the confidence which he expresses (ver. 10), that after all the Galatians will not yield to the temptation. With rhetorical skill the Apostle uses words concerning the Judaizers which drive home the idea that they were not friends, but enemies, who were thus dealing with them. They hinder (ver. 7), they persuade (ver. 8), they trouble (ver. 10), they unsettle (ver. 12).

7. **Ye did run well.** R.V., "Ye were running well." **who did hinder you?** We cannot say whether the Apostle knew by name the adversaries who had done this mischief in Galatia. Even when it is quite clear that he must have known some of his enemies (as in ii. 4, v. 11), he does not name them. Perhaps he felt more free to discuss the principles at stake frankly, if direct personalities were avoided. Even the last clause of ver. 10,

"whosoever he be," would be legitimately used, even if the opponent was known to Paul, in order to emphasize the truth itself. The wonder refers to the raising of an obstacle, here "the law" and its claims, which stopped their Christian progress.

8. **him that calleth you**—that is, God.

9. Most probably this saying (cf. 1 Cor. v. 6–8) was derived by the Apostle from the teaching of Jesus (cf. Matt. xvi. 5–12). By **leaven** we must, of course, understand not persons, but their teaching.

10. **that ye will be none otherwise minded.** Lit., "that ye will not mind another thing," *i.e.* Paul feels confident that they will not give themselves to another form of teaching than that which centred in the Lord Jesus Christ. **through the Lord.** R.V., "in the Lord." This confidence is founded at once on the power of Christ and on the reality of their union with Him. **shall bear his judgment.** One cannot but recall the terrible "anathema" of i. 8, 9. For the Apostle views with great solemnity the position of any man who fights against the Lord of the final judgment (cf. 2 Cor. v. 10; 1 Cor. xi. 29–34; Acts xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 2).

11. **then is the offence of the cross ceased.** R.V., "then hath the stumbling block of the cross been done away." This verse recurs to the accusation, which he met in i. 10, that while with the Jewish Christians of Palestine, he temporized, he adapted himself to his surroundings, *there* he preached circumcision. This statement receives added and vivid force if we take the view that this letter was written from Antioch before the Council of Jerusalem just at the time when bitter

persecution and Peter's temporary defection were bringing things to a head (Acts xv. 1, 2). If, he says, I were still preaching circumcision, I would not be pursued as I am. The offence given by preaching the sufficiency of the cross would have ceased already.

12. The R.V. *margin* gives the true meaning of this verse, "I would that they which unsettle you would even mutilate themselves." The reference is to certain heathen rites which were performed in Galatia itself in the worship of heathen deities, and which involved more terrible mutilation than Jewish circumcision. The meaning is, Would that these who overthrow your Christian order would even go the full length and do as the heathen do! The irony is fierce, of course, but it would serve as no smooth arguments could to emphasize the idea of iii. 8, 9 that to become Jews was to revert to a degraded bondage (cf. Phil. iii. 2, 3).

PART III. PRACTICAL ISSUES OF THE GOSPEL.

(Gal. v. 13–vi. 10.)

1. FREEDOM AND LICENCE (v. 13–15).

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use
not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve
14 one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even
15 in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But
if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be
not consumed one of another.

This brief paragraph is a kind of bridge between the doctrinal discussions of the central part of the epistle and the practical exhortations which are now based on them. The transition springs naturally from the previous idea of "freedom," which he has been expounding as the gift of the gospel. For the Apostle knows well how easy it is to turn freedom into licence. The history of the Church is full of warning that just when people revolt against the tyranny of legalism, and realize their freedom as sons of God, they are tempted to throw all moral restraint to the winds. Antinomianism, as it is called, when men deny the authority of the moral law, is the slough into which they are apt to fall when they escape, blind and wild, from the prison house of formalism and legalism.

13. **called unto liberty.** R.V., "were called for freedom." The word "brethren" marks the recurrence of a warm and affectionate tone. **by love serve one another.** R.V., "through love be servants one to another." He has warned them against one kind of slavery and urged them to be free men. He now calls them to a new kind of slavery! They are to be in bondage not to "the law," not to any priesthood or institution, but, strange to say, to one another. And this slavery is not to be forced on them with outward pains and penalties. It can only spring from their own hearts, "through love."

14. **For all the law.** R.V., "for the whole law." "Law again!" they might well exclaim. Yes, we must live under the law. But the freeman of Christ has fulfilled the entire law when he has fulfilled the one great principle, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The Jews had much

discussion of this law (cf. Luke x. 25–37), and many agreed that "neighbour" meant "fellow-Jew." Some writers accuse Paul of having simply transferred this narrow spirit to the Church and taught only "love of the brethren." His actual words nowhere bear this out (cf. Rom. xiii. 8–10 and notes there; 1 Cor. xiii.). Luther says that here we have theology at once in its shortest and longest form. "For in verbal statement it is very brief; but in act and fact it is broader, longer, deeper, and higher than the whole world."

15. There is here both grim humour and caustic, earnest warning.

Gal. v. 16–26.

2. THE WAR OF FLESH AND SPIRIT.

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not
17 fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the
18 things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit,
19 ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, fornication, un-
20 cleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
21 envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not
22 inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
23 meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with
25 the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us
26 also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another.

The remainder of this chapter is an expansion of the thought contained in vers. 13–15. First (vers. 16–18), taking up the word "flesh" (ver. 13) in connection with its opposing force, the Spirit (ver. 5), he vividly describes the war between them; then (vers. 19–24) he brings the more abstract or general statement to the concrete and particular, enumerating the "works of the flesh" and the "fruit of the Spirit," and their significance for a man's spiritual relations; finally (vers. 25, 26), he returns to the mutual relations of Church members, demanding again the habits of the spirit of love.

16. **This I say then, Walk in the Spirit.** R.V., "But I say, Walk by the Spirit,"—the Holy Spirit, as the R.V. indicates (cf. Rom. viii.). **the flesh** is used by the Apostle not merely to denote our physical body, but our bodily life as the seat of our passions. Hence not merely physical appetites, but hatred, jealousy, covetousness (Rom. vii. 7) are regarded as works of the flesh (vers. 19–21).

17. **Spirit.** R.V., "Spirit." **so that ye cannot do.** R.V., "so that ye may not do." Rom. vii. is an expansion of the thought, an elaboration of the experience which is briefly stated here. In the Christian man a war is raging—the desires which spring from, and are directed by, the power called the flesh are opposed by another set of distinct desires which are set up in him by the Holy Spirit. The Christian man feels that he "would" do right, but in his very nature he feels the forces that interfere with his will.

18. **under the law.** Better, "under law." The man who is conscious that the Holy Spirit is

the source of desire and action finds that the principle of "legalism" has vanished. We can illustrate from the attitude of the habitual criminal who regards the laws and corrective institutions of the State as keeping his will in bondage, as a curse upon his desires. If he become changed in his mind he will find the very laws, which he feared as foreign tyrants, to be the expression of that spirit of social order and peace and goodwill which now he loves. He is no longer, as we say, "under the law."

19–21. R.V., "fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies (*margin*, parties), envyings, drunkenness, revellings." The word adultery is rightly omitted from the list. The word "murders," in the opinion of many authorities, ought to be retained (cf. Rom. i. 28, 29); the Greek words for "envyings" and "murders" are distinguished only by one letter, which might account for the omission of one word by a copyist, but hardly for its insertion. It is usual to see in this list four classes of evils: (1) sexual corruption, (2) heathen practices, (3) offences in act and feeling against fellow-men, (4) intemperance. But Sir W. Ramsay divides them into three groups, due, respectively, to impure religious practices, municipal government with its bitter quarrels, and social life. The Apostle gives these as examples of the kind of thing which "the flesh" produces in human experience. They are "manifest," he says, or familiar to every one. **of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past.** R.V., "of the which I forewarn you (*margin*, tell you plainly), even as I did

forewarn you (*margin,* tell you plainly). **do.** R.V., "practise."

22, 23. The R.V. reads "Spirit" for spirit; "kindness" for gentleness; "faithfulness" for faith; and, in its *margin,* "self-control" for temperance. The attentive consideration of each of these evangelical graces is a source of blessing. To think of each of the "works" named above is to look upon a world and upon experiences of darkness, bitterness, and horror. But these graces do one by one open doors into a world of order and beauty and soul-rest and life eternal. (1) They are ours and realized in us, as fruit of the Divine presence in us. They grow out of that Spirit by which we are led (ver. 17) and live (ver. 25). (2) Over these no alien authority holds sway. The word "law" means the legal principle with all its functions and effects, as it has been exposed in this letter. This "fruit" in a human life being inwardly related to and produced from God Himself, the indwelling Spirit, it cannot be tested or condemned by "law."

24. **And they that are Christ's.** R.V., "of Christ Jesus." An interesting study can be made of the various ways in which the Apostle uses the names of our Lord. The order "Christ Jesus" is rare, and was felt to be so unusual that some copyists appear to have altered it by dropping the second name (cf. Eph. iii. 1; Col. ii. 6). As the gospel spread among the Gentiles the name "Christ" lost some of its merely Jewish historical associations (the Christ or the Messiah), and became a personal name to emphasize the eternal and universal meaning and power of Jesus. **have crucified.** Nothing is more remarkable in Paul's

style than the startling freedom and variety with which he uses the great and central words of the new era in God's relations to mankind. As with "law," "faith," etc., elsewhere, so with "crucify" (cf. iii. 1, Christ was set forth by the preacher as crucified; ii. 20, Paul found that he had been crucified with Christ; v. 24, those who are "of Christ Jesus" have crucified the flesh; vi. 14, through Christ the world has been crucified to Paul, and Paul has been crucified to the world). There are two elements in these statements: (1) that as a believer in Christ, Paul has become so cut off from the principles and passions of his past life that it is as if he had died and passed into a new universe of relations and desires; (2) that this profound and permanent cleavage is the result of the death of Christ upon the Cross (cf. Rom. vi. 1 ff.; 1 Cor. i. 18–25; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15). **the flesh with the affections** (*margin*, passions) **and lusts.** R.V., "the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof."

25, 26. "Ver. 24 corresponds to vers. 19–21, as ver. 25 to vers. 22 and 23" (Benjamin Jowett). In these the Apostle passes on to definite moral exhortations. Having shown in the preceding paragraphs that the dispute about the law is not an abstract battle of words, but bears directly upon a man's realized relations with God, that in the act and life of faith towards Jesus Christ a man receives and experiences the power of the very spirit of God, he naturally desires to enforce the practical lessons of this new and revolutionary situation. Though we cannot trace all the reasons for his specific exhortations, we cannot doubt that he had in mind the exact moral condition and dangers of the Galatian churches. It is instructive to note

that he begins with an apparently minor morality, but one that is the peculiar temptation of a community absorbed in keen and angry disputation. Perhaps he was conscious of his own danger and the more alive to theirs, for "Let *us* not be vainglorious (R.V.), provoking one another, envying one another," he says. Any one who has tasted ecclesiastical and doctrinal controversy knows exactly what that means; and he knows that when party rivalry and passion inflame the heart no "walking by the Spirit" is there possible. The "fruit of the Spirit" (ver. 22) withers or corrupts on the branches of the Holy Vine.

Gal. vi. 1–5.

3. MUTUAL RELATIONS OF THE SPIRITUAL.

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are
spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; con-
2 sidering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one
3 another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if
a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing,
4 he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own
work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and
5 not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden.

In every formal association of men the members hold each other responsible for the observance of the conditions and rules of the association. In the Christian Society this task is peculiarly difficult. The rules here concern matters ideal, spiritual, personal, such as no other institution can pretend to take account of. For instance, there is a danger

that men on the outlook for faults in their neighbours may forget that the rules of this society include the whole matter of mutual esteem, and that a man may sin against these rules very deeply by the motive and manner in which he regards a brother who has committed an outward trespass. In those young Galatian churches there must have been many whose crude notions of right and wrong led to overt acts and words, which the lofty morality of the Christian spirit must condemn. Especially when controversy about the very essence of the gospel was creating disorder might we expect to find recrimination grown harsh, and condemnation at once proud and relentless. To that situation this paragraph is addressed. It cannot be summarized, so packed with energy and meaning is each hot successive statement. The whole passage (with v. 26) takes up again the thought of v. 13–15.

1. **Brethren.** The word of urgency and affection, perhaps suggesting here that the conduct recommended is alone worthy of brothers in Christ. **if a man . . . in a fault.** R.V., "even if a man be overtaken in any trespass." Opinions differ as to whether "overtaken" means that a man has been surprised by temptation into a sudden sin, or has been caught by others in the act of sin. The context and the word "even" of the R.V. would seem to justify the latter interpretation. **ye which are spiritual** (cf. 1 Cor. ii. 13, 15, etc., occurring 15 times in 1 Cor.). This is not addressed to the self-satisfied, conscious of moral superiority. It means "ye, as people who are led by the Spirit of God." **restore.** There is no reference here to ecclesiastical action, though that is not excluded.

It is personal work which is required, patient and kindly dealing, as with a wounded man. **spirit of meekness** (cf. v. 23; 1 Cor. vi. 21). Meekness has been called "the supreme mark of a spiritual man."

2. The burdens may be of all kinds, but probably the Apostle was thinking of moral burdens, and of the perplexity and sorrow which oppressed the repentant soul. **the law of Christ** (cf. v. 13, 14). To serve one another in love was Christ's work (Matt. xx. 26–28; John xiii. 1–17). It is a law above the Mosaic law; its fulfilment flows from a Person in whom it was embodied and set forth.

3. Spiritual conceit is a most subtle poison. In it a man becomes his own deceiver. His self-esteem is the exposure of his nothingness.

4. While tender towards others, a man should **prove** or scrutinize **his own work.** Let him not be content with his inner motives and emotions, but look at the thing he does, the whole outward expression of himself. **have rejoicing in.** R.V., "have his glorying in regard of." He will have the ground of his boasting—if he can find any—not through his fancied superiority to "another" (R.V., "his neighbour"), but in reference to **himself alone.**

5. **The burden** (R.V. *margin*, "load") means the pack or kit which each soldier of Christ must bear. Carry your own kit and help with the other man's crushing burden.

Gal. vi. 6–10.

4. SPIRITUAL BOONS AND CARNAL GIFTS.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him
7 that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is
not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he
8 also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh
reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of
9 the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in
well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all
men, especially unto them who are of the household of
faith.

This paragraph, like the rest, must have been addressed to the exact circumstances of the Galatian churches. It deals in a deep and trenchant manner with the use of money for spiritual ends; and it indicates that the Judaizers had been interfering with this aspect of the life of those churches. The Apostle, in his organization of those churches, must have secured that certain persons should be set apart for the work of teaching and for overseeing the "charities" of the community. An attack upon his gospel would lead naturally to an attack upon so fundamental a feature of the new movement. No systematic undermining of his whole conception of the Church could fail to undermine the position of those who were appointed to, and supported in, the teaching of his gospel, and its social, ethical issues. Although vers. 7–10 do state general principles, capable of varied and far-reaching applications, both their statement and their immediate application here rise out of the particular law of the new communities which is

stated in ver. 6. Unless such a view of the paragraph is taken we must either treat ver. 6 as a parenthesis, an abrupt command unrelated and unargued, or we must interpret it, with Meyer, as having no reference to the payment of teachers, but solely to fellowship in moral and spiritual "goods."

6. **Let him,** etc. R.V., "But let him." The adversative "but" links this statement closely to what has been said of the mutual relations of believers, and especially to the last words about the individual burden. **taught in the word.** Early in the Church's life it became clear that some must be set apart to "the ministry of the word" (Acts vi. 2–4). St. Paul recognizes and discusses this necessity throughout his work (Acts xiv. 23, xx. 17, 28; Phil. i. 1, 2; and the Pastoral Epistles) and emphasizes the responsibility of the churches for the maintenance of their ministers (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 6-18; 2 Cor. ix. 6–15; Rom. xv. 27; Phil. iv. 15; 1 Tim. v. 17, 18). **communicate.** The support of their pastors is a form of fellowship. It is a spiritual act.

7. **God is not mocked.** Lit., turning up the nose at one (cf. Luke xvi. 14 and xxiii. 35). **for whatsoever a man soweth,** etc. In these words, and in ver. 8, the Apostle uses a well-known general principle (cf. Hos. viii. 7; Job iv. 8; Mark iv. 1 ff.) to illustrate the present matter.

8. The Revised Version is right to translate "soweth unto his own flesh" to describe the man who sees nothing to do with money but to use it for selfish, temporal ends. But R.V. is probably wrong to print the word "Spirit" with a capital, as if the direct reference were to the Holy Spirit. What he means is that God has

established a deep law that the man who lives only for present or fleshly interests shall get only the appropriate rewards, and he only who "soweth" for the life of his spiritual nature shall receive the appropriate reward of that labour and foresight. The one reward is corruption, the other eternal life. This applies directly to those who spend their money in order to receive instruction in the things of the spirit (cf. Rom. viii. 5–8, 21). This is a Divine principle and men cannot afford to "turn up their noses" at it, as if the results could be evaded.

9, 10. In these verses the exhortation, while general in form, finds its nerve in this very matter of giving money. In this men soon lose heart and faint. (For this word cf. Matt. xv. 32; Mark viii. 3; Heb. xii. 3.) Let us remember the **due** or appointed **season** of harvest, and seize the time that now is for being generous. The word "good" must be connected with "all good things" in ver. 6, and referred to material gifts. **toward all men.** From the first the Christian spirit, while concentrating affection and beneficence upon fellow-believers, **of the household of faith** (Eph. ii. 19; Tim. v. 8), reached out to all men. The root of all love for humanity is in the love of the children of our Father.

CONCLUSION.

(Gal. vi. 11–18.)

1. AN AUTOGRAPH MESSAGE (vi. 11–16).

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with
12 mine own hand. As many as desire to make a fair shew

in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.
13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may
14 glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the
15 world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything,
16 nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

The eleventh verse shows that the Apostle ceased at this point to dictate, took up the pen, and in large, emphatic handwriting set down this brief, fearless, passionate, and conclusive paragraph. Three elements or aims are discernible in it. (1) The sharp and decisive statement of the irreconcilable principles of law and grace—the method of "the flesh" (vers. 12, 13, 15) and of the Cross (vers. 12, 14); (2) the emphatic exposure of the sinister motives of the Jewish Christians who fear persecution (ver. 12) and desire to boast that they have won adherents to the law (ver. 13); (3) the reassertion of his own position, based on his fundamental experience of the power of the Cross (ver. 14). The paragraph ends with a singularly beautiful benediction, especially suggestive and impressive in its very last words—"The Israel of God."

11. **Ye see how large a letter.** R.V., "See with how large letters" (cf. Rom. xvi. 22; 2 Thess. iii. 17; Philem. 19, 21). The Apostle ceases to dictate and, as seems to have been his custom, writes the concluding words with his own hand. He calls attention to the large style of writing which he

will use for this important summary, and proceeds to write a longer paragraph than seems to have been his custom. **I have written.** R.V. *margin*, "write." The perfect tense in English is the literal translation, but the present "write" is the correct English idiom. The writer in Greek put himself at the point of view of the man who was to read. Paul meant, "When you read this, note with what emphatic large letters I have written the following summary of the whole situation." A good example is Philem. 19, where he says "I have written" just before the words he refers to—"I will repay."

12. **in the flesh.** We must connect this word with its meaning in iii. 3. The Jews insisted on circumcision. **compel you.** R.V., "constrain you." Because they believed in the utility of the fleshly ordinances, which Paul's gospel condemned as valueless. The Jewish Christians tried to maintain their good standing (fair shew) among their countrymen because they feared persecution (cf. the record of fierce persecution in these very churches, Acts xiii. 39, 50, xiv. 1–7, 19). **for the cross of Christ.** The ground of persecution was the assertion that the death of Christ had broken the authority of the law (iii. 10–14).

13. These verses (12, 13) must refer to Jews who professed Christianity. Paul maintains that their position with the double motive of ver. 12 is really a weak and intolerable compromise. Though circumcised they do not "keep the law" (R.V. *margin*, "a law"). The word "keep" is variously used in N.T.: to guard a prisoner, Acts xii. 4; to protect some one, 2 Thes. iii. 3; to treasure something, 1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 12;

to obey definite commands, Matt. xix. 20. In Acts xxi. 24 we have the nearest approach to the meaning here, and an instructive comparison is possible (cf. Rom. ii. 26). But here the definite article is deliberately omitted. To "guard law" (cf. notes on meaning of "law" in Rom. ii.) must here refer not to any breach of any one moral law (a law) or of the Mosaic law specifically (the law), but to the legalist principle. Like Peter at Antioch (ii. 14; cf. the argument of iii. 2–5) these men who believed in Christ were trying to preserve also the habit and principle of dependence upon "law." But as believers they do not and cannot succeed in this. **but desire.** R.V., "but they desire." This poor compromise arises from a worldly and sinister motive. They still—again like Peter at Antioch—feel the pressure of their "set," and long to stand well with their old compeers. The ancient passion for proselytizing drives them still. They long to boast that they have added to the number of "the circumcised." The Epistle to the Hebrews was mainly occasioned by the same confusions of opinion and vision, which sentiment for the old created among men who had passed into a new world.

14. **But God forbid that I should glory.** R.V., "But far be it from me to glory." On "God forbid" see note (Rom. vi. 1). The Apostle frequently refers to "boasting" or "glorying" as a natural impulse, which becomes either a virtue or a sin according to its meaning and occasion (cf. 1 Cor. i. 31; Rom. v. 27). **by whom** (*margin*, whereby). R.V., "through which" (*margin*, whom). Paul has learned that there is no ground of human confidence (cf. Phil. iii. 3 ff.) save in the atoning

death of Christ. Confidence in that means a break with the "world," with the whole system of external rites and ceremonies, so complete that death itself is the only true analogy.

15. So complete, indeed, that these rites have simply no meaning or reality in the new universe to which faith in the Cross of Christ points a man. Then, "a new creature," or better with R.V. *margin* "new creation," opens out in which the fleshly ordinances have no place at all (cf. v. 6 and Col. ii. 20). The words **in Christ Jesus** are rightly omitted by R.V.

16. **and upon the Israel of God.** "and" introduces an explanation or addition to the preceding phrase **as many as walk according to this rule,** namely, true and thorough believers in Christ (for this use of "and" cf. Heb. xi. 17; Mark x. 45). "Israel of God" involves the same principle as that discussed under the heirship of Abraham (iii. 1–29; Rom. iv. 11–17). (Cf. John i. 48; Rom. ii. 28, 29; Eph. ii. 12.)

Gal. vi. 17, 18.

2. THE STIGMATA OF JESUS AND BENEDICTION.

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my
18 body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

17. This verse is full of passion but not of anger. It springs from the consciousness of apostleship. The protagonist for the gospel of grace knows that the attack on that gospel has been tinged with hostility to himself as its leading expounder. The

attack has wounded and burdened him. The agony which was uttered in i. 6–10 and iv. 12–20 utters here its last word of pain. When he says "Let no man trouble me" (for this phrase cf. Mark xiv. 6; Luke xi. 7, xviii. 5, etc.), it is no feverish or selfish moan that escapes him. It is the sense that in attacking him the enemy reveal their hatred of the gospel for which alone he labours. **for I bear,** etc. R.V., "for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." He is the slave of Jesus, who owns and uses him for His service; and in that service he has received wounds which mark him for ever as the bond-servant of that living Master (Acts xiii. 50, xiv. 5, 19).

18. The benediction, which is a prayer of intense faith and feeling, ends (as in R.V.) with the word "brethren" or brothers, striking as the last note of a letter which has used so many chords of power, varied with harsh discords and sweetest melodies, the tone of tender and appealing confidence and love.

ROMANS.

INTRODUCTORY.

Rom. i. 1–7.

1. FORMAL AND PERSONAL.

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle,
2 separated unto the gospel of God, (which he had promised
3 afore by his prophets in the holy Scriptures,) concerning
his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed
4 of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son
of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by
5 the resurrection from the dead: by whom we have received
grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all
6 nations, for his name: among whom are ye also the called
7 of Jesus Christ: to all that be in Rome, beloved of God,
called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace, from God
our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The opening words of formal address and salutation are fuller than in any other epistle, approached only by those in Gal. i. 1–5 (see notes there). The three customary elements are all here—the name and description of the writer, the name or description of the persons addressed, and the greeting. It is the first of these that is here expanded to unusual length (vers. 1–6), and includes a double reference to the Divine origin of his own apostleship, and a remarkable statement regarding the Person of

Jesus Christ. Personally, the paragraph reveals the full sense of an authority which came from God, and which bore upon the nature and power of the "gospel of God." Historically, it proves that already a community of Christians were gathered at Rome, to whom the Apostle could address himself with confidence as sharers in a common faith. Doctrinally, it lays bare those facts about Christ on which the apostolic churches were founded and which might be presupposed in any written unfolding of the nature of the Christian life.

1. **Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ.** R.V. *margin*, "bondservant." On the name "Paul" see notes on Acts xiii. 9. For readers of O.T. the "bondservant" or "slave of Christ Jesus" would recall the similar way in which prophets described themselves as servants of Jehovah (cf. Ps. lxxxix. 3, 20; Jer. vii. 25; Amos iii. 7, etc.). Here as elsewhere in N.T. the name of Christ takes the place of, yet without displacing, the name of Jehovah, for the Christian consciousness (cf. notes on Gal. i. 1 ff.). **called to be an apostle.** Though this phrase only occurs again in 1 Cor. i. 11 the idea is present in other passages (cf. Acts ix. 1–19; Gal. i. 1, 15, 16; Eph. iii. 8, 9—the best commentaries on this phrase). **separated** (cf. Gal. i. 15). **the gospel of God.** God, Creator and Lord of all, is the source and author of that great new world of truth and life for which the one word "evangel" or "gospel" has become at once the summary and the technical term (Mark i. 1). The slave of Christ, the Apostle, has been wholly and finally "set apart" for the one supreme life-task of making that gospel known.

2. From our Lord Himself the apostles learned to connect the new with the old, the gospel with the promise, the full revelation on the planes of history with the forecasts and preparation for it in O.T. history (Matt. v. 17, 18; Luke xxiv. 27). The Apostle Paul regarded the O.T. as sacred books, as the voice of God (cf. Gal. iii. 8, 22).

3, 4. The R.V. (1) rightly omits the words "Jesus Christ our Lord," (2) reads "who was born" instead of **which was made**; (3) prints "spirit" instead of **Spirit**, (4) rightly translates "resurrection of the dead" instead of **from the dead**, (5) adds to ver. 4 "even Jesus Christ our Lord." These verses summarize much explicit teaching about the Person of Christ which was apparently given at the very foundation of all Christian churches, and which can be, as it were, cited or merely referred to as familiar truth in letters which were written to deal with other aspects and problems of the faith. (Compare the references to the Incarnation in Gal. iv. 4, 5; 2 Cor. iv. 4, viii. 9; Phil. ii. 5–11 with the fuller exposition in Col. i. 14–20, when Paul was writing to a community beginning to be troubled with that great problem.) (1) The gospel message concerns "His Son," who is "Jesus Christ our Lord." Jesus was not a man who became Son of God, but the Son of God who became man (Rom. viii. 3). He was sent into our world, having already a nature and relations with the eternal God, which are dimly symbolized or expressed by the word "Son." The Gospels show that the term "Son of God" was used by the Jews as a vague, honorific title for their expected Messiah. It rapidly acquired a deeper and definite meaning from Christ's applica-

tion of it to Himself, along with His peculiar use of the term "Father" and "My Father," in relation to Himself (Matt. vii. 21, x. 32, 33, xxv. 34; John viii. *passim*, x. 17, 18, 36 ff.). (2) The Son of God took his place in history, "according to the flesh," and did so as a descendant of David, heir therefore of the prophetic visions connected with His name (cf. Matt. i. 1, ix. 27, xii. 23, xv. 22, xx. 30, 31, xxi. 9, 15, xxii. 42 and parallels in Mark and Luke, with 2 Sam. vii. 8–16; Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4; Isa. ix. 7, xi. 1). (3) The resurrection of Christ was the full revelation of His glory as the Son of God. It **declared** (*margin* in A.V. and R.V., "determined") or marked out His Divine nature "with" or "in power." For Paul always regards that event as a supreme manifestation at once of the power of God and of the Lordship of Christ (Phil. ii. 10, 11; Eph. i. 19–23). (4) The contrasted phrases "according to the flesh" and "according to the Spirit of holiness" describe generally the sphere within which the actions take place. Through and in the world known as "the flesh" (cf. note on Gal. ii. 21) He appeared as "Son of David"; through and in the powers described by the phrase "Spirit of holiness" He appeared as the Son of God.

5. **By whom . . . name.** R.V., "Through whom we received grace and apostleship into obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake." **grace.** One of the words which in the N.T. take on a depth and richness of meaning unknown in ordinary usage. Originally meaning gracefulness or agreeableness in any object, it came to mean the disposition of kindness on the part of the giver or the receiver of a gift towards one another.

Hence it may be used either for generosity or gratitude. As applied to God in His relations with men it became inevitably qualified by the fact of man's sin and ill-desert. It then signified the freedom, generosity, and fulness of God's love and mercy as contrasted with the righteous wrath (Eph. ii. 1, 10), with the idea that God's reward of righteousness is payment of a debt (Rom. iv. 4, 5), with "the law" as conceived (wrongly) to be a principle or source of salvation (Gal. v. 3, 4). Grace is, in N.T., the love of God dealing with sin and the sinner in Christ (Rom. v. 2, 8, 15) for pardon (Rom. v. 17, 18; Eph. i. 17), cleansing, and deliverance (Rom. vi. 14), and is made effective in us through the act of faith (Rom. iv. 4, 5; Eph. ii. 8). Hence the Apostle habitually names it along with "peace" in his benedictions (ver. 7), for it is man's apprehension of the meaning and power and direct personal aim of God's grace that creates within him the "peace of God" (Rom. v. 1; Phil. iv. 7, 9). Paul refers often to his apostleship as an office to which he was appointed by the grace of God (cf. Eph. iii. 2, 8). **for obedience to the faith among all nations.** R.V., "unto obedience of faith (*margin*, to the faith) among all the nations" (for "nations" read "Gentiles"). There is a sense in which the gospel has become the supreme law of human life, which can only be fulfilled or obeyed through faith. The act of faith is an act of obedience (cf. Gal. iii. 2–5; Rom. iii. 27, x. 16). The gospel has final authority over the whole race, Gentiles as well as Jews. **for His name.** R.V., "for his name's sake." That the riches of His revelation, summed up in His name, may be effective.

6. **the called of Jesus Christ.** R.V., "called

to be Jesus Christ's." It is evident that Paul is addressing the Roman Christians as a community composed for the most part of Gentiles. They have heard the "call" of Christ and have become His property.

7. **in Rome** (see Introduction, pp. 33 ff.). **beloved of God.** Great and startling words when addressed to a definite group of human beings conscious of sin. **called to be saints.** God's love commands and summons men to surrender themselves to Him, to be separated unto Him. The words "called" and "saints" have each a previous history. Each is deepened and intensified by the gospel. (For origin of the phrase, *vid.* International Commentary on *Romans* by Sanday and Headlam.) Our Lord uses the word "called" (Matt. xx. 16, xxii. 14). Paul uses it about fifteen times in both forms, "calling" and "called," to describe the act of God in summoning individuals through the gospel to repentance and faith (except 1 Cor. vii. 20), or to the service of an apostle (1 Cor. i. 26; Eph. iv. 1; Phil. iii. 14; Rom. viii. 28; 1 Cor. i. 24). The word "saints" goes back to the O.T. consecration of objects to the worship of Jehovah. As they were "holy" or "set apart," so Jehovah came to be spoken of as in Himself "holy," perhaps at first in His exaltation above earthly things and taint, but finally in His very character and being. Then His holiness, when ethically grasped, became the basis for demanding personal, moral holiness in His people (Lev. xi. 44, 45, xix. 2; 1 Pet. i. 16). In N.T. it is used of God (Rev. iv. 4), but with great frequency and significance applied to the eternal Spirit of God, as "the Holy Spirit." When applied to all believers it

expresses not the idea that they are perfect in character, but the double idea that they are consecrated or set apart for God in Christ, and are expected to manifest His character in their lives. **Grace to you, and peace** (see note on Gal. i. 3). **God our Father.** The "beloved of God" have no name for Him dearer or higher than that of Father, which they have received from "the Son" Himself (*vid.* Sermon on the Mount and Parable of the Prodigal Son). **the Lord Jesus Christ.** The Apostle names him no less than six times in these seven verses. "Lord" refers to His supreme power and authority; "Jesus" to His historical manifestation and personality; "Christ" to His fulfilment of the saving promise and purpose of God.

Rom. i. 8–17.

2. THE APOSTLE'S YEARNING TO PREACH AT ROME.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all,
that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.
9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the
gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of
10 you always in my prayers: making request, if by any
means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by
11 the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you,
that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end
12 ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted
together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.
13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that often-
times I proposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,)
that I might have some fruit among you also, even as
14 among other Gentiles. I am debtor both to the Greeks,

and to the Barbarians ; both to the wise, and to the unwise.
15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel
16 to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ : for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ; to the Jew first, and also
17 to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith : as it is written, *The just shall live by faith.*

In these ten verses the Apostle describes to the Romans the long and intense yearning which he has cherished to visit and labour among them (9–12). But he has hitherto been prevented from doing this and now seems to believe that the obstacles are being removed (13). He feels himself a debtor to all men, and therefore to the Romans, in respect of that great thing of which he has been put in charge, viz. the gospel (14–16). It is the "Power of God" addressed to and working through faith, and hence available for all men of every race (16, 17).

8. **is spoken of.** The Apostle simply means that the existence of a Christian Church in Rome was known wherever Christianity had spread (cf. 1 Thess. i. 8). The fact was so important that he says it "was proclaimed" (R.V.) (cf. 1 Cor. xi. 26); and he, who seems to have the Empire ever in his view as a citizen and a missionary statesman, is moved to profound gratitude over their "faith," *i.e.* their acceptance of the gospel.

9, 10. **whom I serve** (cf. Acts xxvii. 23 ; Phil. iii. 3 ; Matt. iv. 4). **in my spirit.** The higher nature of man, the point of contact with the Spirit of God (viii. 16). **that without ceasing . . . will of God.** R.V., "how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers making

request, if by any means now at length I may be prospered by the will of God." On Paul's pastoral prayers cf. Eph. iii. 14–19; Phil. i. 3–11; Col. i. 3–6, 9–12). The intensity of his prayers, "even for as many as have not seen my face," is revealed in Col. ii. 1.

11. **some spiritual gift.** This phrase may not include miracles in this passage (cf. Gal. iii. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 4, 10, 28), for the following verse points to the moral sphere, being comforted in and by each other's faith.

13. There may have been some unrecorded reason for this full explanation of his frequent plans and their frustration. From those whom he knew in Rome and whom he met in his travels, a desire for such a visit may have been expressed (cf. Acts xviii. 12; 1 Cor. xvi. 19). **among other Gentiles.** R.V., "in the rest of the Gentiles." His great passion is to produce **fruit** (John xv. 5, 8), especially among the Gentiles to whom he was appointed (Acts xxii. 21, xxvi. 16–21; Gal. i. 16). Hence his eager desire (ver. 11, "I long") to serve this Gentile Church in Rome.

14. **debtor.** He was under an obligation (1 Cor. ix. 16). **Greeks, Barbarians.** That is, people who spoke Greek and the miscellaneous races of the Empire. **wise, foolish.** The educated and the unintelligent. For the gospel was given to "the world," hence to the poor (Matt. xi. 5, 25), the ignorant, the despised, as well as to the mighty and the noble (1 Cor. iii. 26 ff.).

15. Some would translate: "Hence my strong desire is to preach the gospel." But the meaning is the same.

16, 17. Most scholars point out that four succes-

sive statements each beginning with "for" are used to explain this eagerness. The mention of "shame" here proves that the Apostle was aware of, perhaps sensitive to, the scorn which superior persons then (as now) heaped on the "word of the cross" (1 Cor. i. 18). The sense of a great daring seized him when he pictured this message taking hold of Rome. But he crushes all temptation to shrink, and repudiates shame. **for it is the power of God.** As he contemplates imperial Rome the imperial majesty of the gospel exalts itself before his eyes. The gospel is the supreme fact in human life henceforth; it is the manifestation and exertion of the eternal force resident in God (1 Cor. i. 18, 24, etc). This power is effective through Christ (1 Cor. i. 24; 2 Cor. xii. 9; cf. 2 Pet. i. 16) and the Holy Ghost (Rom. xv. 13). **unto salvation.** In the O.T. salvation was applied to the act of Jehovah in the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt (Ex. xiv. 30, xv. 2; Ps. cvi. 8; Isa. lxiii. 8, 9) and from exile (Isa. xlv. 17, etc.), and was used also in more general terms (Ps. xxvii. 1, lxii. 1, 2, 7, li. 12). In the N.T (1) the word is used of the general hope of salvation in the day of the Messiah; (2) while the word "Saviour" is applied to Jesus only twice in the gospel (Luke ii. 11; John iv. 42), it is used freely in Acts and Epistles, *i.e.* after He had been fully revealed as the Messiah or Christ (Acts v. 31, xiii. 23; Phil. iii. 20; 2 Tim. i. 10; Tit. i. 4, ii. 13; 2 Pet. i. 1, iii. 2); (3) it is still used of God (1 Tim. i. 1, ii. 3; Tit. i. 3, ii. 10; Jude 25); (4) the word "salvation" is still used in an eschatological sense, *i.e.* its consummation is thrown into the future (Rom. xiii. 11; 2 Cor. vii. 10; Phil. i.

19, iii. 20; 1 Thess. v. 8; Heb. ix. 28; 1 Pet. i. 5), but it is begun now; it takes hold of us in the present (2 Cor. vi. 2; Phil. i. 28; Heb. ii. 3, v. 9). The gospel as the manifested force of God, and exerted upon human nature, results in ultimate and complete deliverance from sin and wrath, from all evil and death itself. That is what Paul means by "salvation." **to every one that believeth,**—*i.e.* to him, whosoever he is, who in an act of trust has committed himself, his whole relations, character, and destiny to God in Christ. The N.T. in general teaches this fundamental doctrine, but it is Paul who in his writings has worked out its full meaning and power most completely. He sees most clearly that in faith a man (1) apprehends the Messiahship of Jesus and His Divine Sonship; (2) feels the need of his own reconciliation with God, and deliverance from the power of sin and death; (3) sees the death and resurrection of Christ as deeds of God which have the salvation of men as their motive and end; (4) commits himself to God in Christ that this end may include, and be realized in, himself; (5) henceforth lives out of that attitude of humble trust, with the energy of love, gratitude, and hope, in the assurance that he is now verily dead unto sin, but alive unto God in his union with Christ Jesus. We shall see these points worked out with great thoroughness in the succeeding argument of this Epistle. **to the Jew first.** While Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles, and is here addressing a Gentile Church, he is never disloyal to that distinct glory which God had given to his own race in the working out of salvation for the whole world (cf. Rom. iii. 1, 2). Even the heated argument

of Ep. to Gal. against the Judaizers rests upon the fact that salvation has flowed in history (1) from the promise to Abraham (Gal. iii. 7); (2) through the stormy operation of the law (Gal. iii. 19); (3) to the work of Jesus the Messiah, who was "born under the law" (Gal. iv. 4). In the argument of Rom. ix.–xi. we shall find a marvellous blending of admiration for God's use of Israel with faithful exposition of the sin and responsibility of the individual Jew.

17. **For therein . . . faith.** R.V., "For therein is revealed a righteousness of God by (*margin*, from) faith unto faith." **therein** means the gospel, the story of blessing which is bound up with the name of "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (ver. 7). **righteousness of God.** The A.V. trans. "the righteousness," is preferable to R.V. "a righteousness." The O.T. knew Jehovah as the Righteous One, who "does right" (Gen. xviii. 25), who is faithful to His covenant with Israel (Isa. xli. 8–10), whose ordinances are righteous (Ps. cxix. 137–144, xix. 9), who will establish Israel in righteousness, *i.e.* vindicate them as His people before all men (Isa lxi. 11, lxii. 1 ff.). In the second part of Isaiah "righteousness" is thus used not merely as "a Divine attribute" but as "a Divine effect." "It is something produced by God" (A. B. Davidson). In this fulness of meaning it must be taken here. The righteousness of God has not been realized among men by means of law. A new way has been found by God Himself. He, the Righteous One, has made righteousness in the richest and most varied meanings of that term (Luke i. 69, 71, 77; cf. xix. 9) effective and real among men. **from faith**

to faith. This making of a righteous world, which is salvation (cf. Ps. xcviii. 2; Isa. li. 5, 6), is achieved by awaking limitless faith—a faith that abolishes all doubt and drinks in the fellowship of "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" continually. For every act of faith, in and from which the righteousness of God is realized, will see further faith possible, height beyond height, of the righteousness which "is being revealed." **as it is written,** etc., see note on Gal. iii. 11.

PART I. THE UNIVERSAL NEED OF SALVATION.

(Rom. i. 18–iii. 20.)

The sixteenth and seventeenth verses of this chapter have given us a brief definition of the gospel. The Apostle now enters on the great task of explaining and defending that gospel. His first duty is evidently to prove that "salvation," or a revealed "righteousness of God," is necessary for the whole human race. This can only be done by a survey of the actual condition of mankind in respect of righteousness, that is, of its religious and moral state. He does this in three successive arguments; (1) the condition of the Gentile world in i. 18–32; (2) the position of the Jew in ii. 1–iii. 8; (3) the scriptural declarations on the subject in iii. 9–20. The first section consists of two main portions. The first (vers. 18–23) describes man's unfaithfulness to the light and knowledge of God which he

actually possessed. The second portion, in three brief but terrible paragraphs, describes the moral conditions (vers. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28–32) which flow from idolatry, to which the Apostle says three times "God gave them up."

Rom. i. 18–32.

1. THE DOOM OF THE GENTILE WORLD.

(a) The betrayal of knowledge (i. 18–23).

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all
ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the
19 truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be
known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it
20 unto them. For the invisible things of him from the
creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by
the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-
21 head; so that they are without excuse: because that, when
they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither
were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and
22 their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves
23 to be wise, they became fools. And changed the glory of
the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corrupt-
ible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping
things.

In this paragraph the Apostle declares that instead of the effective righteousness of God, the effective wrath of God has been and is in operation among men (ver. 18); and that, because (1) men have possessed the truth about God, and have learned about His power and other attributes from the visible universe (vers. 19, 20); but (2) their

hearts did not respond in admiration and gratitude to Him (ver. 21); for (3) becoming vain and foolish they gave up direct worship of God for contemptible idolatry.

18. **the wrath of God.** While this wrath no doubt is brought to its climax in the day of judgment (cf. in O.T. "the day of Jehovah," Joel ii. 31, iii. 12 ff.; Isa. ii. 12–22, and 1 Thess. i. 10), the following paragraphs show that it works in the history of man now. **is revealed from heaven.** The spiritual eye can see in man's experience that wrath is upon him. It is a revelation which precedes, leads up to, and makes necessary the revelation of righteousness (ver. 17). **who hold the truth.** R.V., "who hold down the truth" (cf. 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7).

19, 20. The "invisible things" are **his eternal power and Godhead.** R.V., "his everlasting power and divinity." The nature of God as a personal power and his attributes are discoverable, they are actually **understood** (R.V., "perceived"), by a scrutiny of **the things that are made.** And man has always had this truth, but "held it down." In this knowledge man is not the only or the chief active agent, **for God hath shewed it unto them.** R.V., "manifested it unto them." The **creation of the world**, or, as we should say, "nature" has always borne witness to God; and proof can be found, not only in the literature of the higher religions, but in the beliefs of primitive folk, that the soul of man has always felt itself in the presence of One who is mighty and glorious, worthy of reverence and worship. **so that they are without excuse.** A.V. *margin*, "that they may be." The R.V. exchanges the text and

margin of A.V., unfortunately. The next verse, with its **because** shows that the Apostle simply looks at the fact that they are without excuse, and declares its reason.

21. If it be asked why such obscurity has rested on God's name, and confusion and degradation in man's religious history, the Apostle answers by laying it all to man's account. God has done His part, "manifested it unto them" (ver. 19), and fashioned the world as the symbol through which the mind (ver. 20) could recognize Him; but men have failed of their part. (1) Negatively, they have withheld that active movement of their life Godwards, which is glorifying Him, delighting in Him as God, and giving thanks. (2) Positively, men indulged in wilful "reasonings" (A.V. **imaginations**) which ended in nothing. **they became vain, and their foolish** (R.V., "senseless") **heart was darkened** (cf. Mark vii. 18).

22. They insisted on their wisdom (cf. 1 Cor. i. 21), but made themselves foolish.

23. The climax of folly is in this, that men turned from contemplating the pure and direct nature of God, glorious and incorruptible, and exchanged it for **an image made like to** (R.V., "the likeness of an image of") **corruptible man,** and even of creatures down to the lowest and most repulsive.

(b) The resultant and judicial degradation (i. 24–32).

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through
the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies
25 between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a

lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the
26 Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause
God gave them up unto vile affections; for even their
women did change the natural use into that which is against
27 nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use
of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another;
men with men working that which is unseemly, and
receiving in themselves that recompense of their error
28 which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain
God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a repro-
bate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
29 being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wicked-
ness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder,
30 debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters
of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things,
31 disobedient to parents. Without understanding, covenant-
breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
32 who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which
commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the
same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

24, 25. R.V., "Whereupon God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonoured among themselves: for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie" etc. **God gave them up.** This phrase (which recurs, vers. 26, 28) expresses the continued action of God, but now it is in "wrath" or judgment. He, as it were, delivered them over to alien forces, the **lusts of their own hearts.** When God ceased to be the object of their worship He ceased to be the spring of their action. They were left to find their life wholly within the sphere of their own hearts and their unclean promptings. The nexus between religion and morality is just there, in the fact that the supreme object of our

admiration and trust becomes inevitably the controller of our desires and the reason of our action. If God (**the truth of God**) is given up, and the creature occupies His place in our imagination and admiration, the creation, or "nature," alone gives law to our conduct. **more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.** R.V., "rather than." As the Apostle thinks of this horror, the preference of the creature to the Creator, he pauses, as pious Jewish writers did, to cleanse his mind with an act of adoration.

26, 27. Once more, and more fully Paul describes the shameful lengths to which human beings could go when given up **unto vile affections.** R.V., "vile passions"; *margin*, "passions of dishonour."

28. Yet again with still greater detail, the Apostle, burning with holy, moral indignation, describes the issues of that surrender to a godless life, as they appear in the whole range of sins, apart from sensuality, which infest our social life. **And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.** R.V., "And even as they refused (*margin*, "did not approve") to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up." There is a slight play of words which is brought out by saying, "as they did not approve of keeping God in their knowledge, God gave them up to the sway of a disapproved mind." **knowledge.** Same word in Phil. i. 9, signifying a high degree of knowledge, more than superficial acquaintance with the fact of God's existence or character. Their disapproval implies a testing of God. They deliberately made up their minds that they would not pursue the knowledge of God. **a reprobate**

mind. Their mind was in turn tested by God and given up to itself and its own likings. **not convenient.** R.V., "not fitting." This word only occurs once again in N.T. (Acts xxii. 22), when the Jews found it offensive that Paul should live. But Paul may have echoed its use by Stoic philosophers for "duties."

29, 30, 31. No classification of these forms of moral evil is possible. The R.V. unfortunately puts "hateful to God" in the text, and the correct meaning, "haters of God," in the margin. **inventors of evil things,** means "the tendency to put the worst construction upon things."

32. **the judgment of God.** R.V., "the ordinance of God." They know well the rule which God has established. **but have pleasure in them that do them.** R.V., "but also consent with them that practise them." To do a wrong deed, or even to practise wrong individually, is one thing, and bad enough. But to have a hearty delight in the social practice and help to make it social, is to aggravate guilt.

Note. — Many have severely condemned this passage of the Apostle Paul's great epistle. He is said to have here slandered human nature, to have presented a picture of society so exaggerated that no society could have survived such a collapse of all human decency and social order. We must remember (1) that Roman writers themselves have described Roman society in terms quite as dark as this. Tacitus says of Rome: "Nobility, wealth, the refusal of office, its acceptance—everything was a crime and virtue the surest ruin" (quoted by T. R. Glover, *The Conflict of Religion in the Early*

Roman Empire). And the Roman poets, Juvenal and Horace, speak no less terribly of the facts; (2) Paul does not, of course, mean that every individual was guilty of all these vices and sins. Religion is a social fact, and he is describing the social results of its general collapse as he saw them in the heathen world; (3) Paul was not slow to acknowledge goodness where he saw it, as the next chapter will show. And he whose mind in beholding the welter of idolatrous shrines at Athens could pierce to the significant pathos of the altar "to the unknown God" was not deaf or dead to the fact that all around were men whose souls were not steeped in sensuality or crushed by crime. (5) He is answering the question—Does this world need salvation, a revealed and effective and new "righteousness of God"? This he answers faithfully and, as history shows, he answers truly when he depicts the results of prolonged godlessness and idolatry, as he has done in this appalling passage.

Rom. ii. 1–iii. 20.

2. THE CONDEMNATION OF THE JEW.

From the Gentile world in its dismal state the Apostle turns to the Jew. But, very skilfully, (*a*) he begins (ii. 1) with a personal argument and without naming his interlocutor. It is not until (*b*) the second step in his argument (ver. 12) that he mentions the law, and not until (*c*) the third step (ver. 17) that he directly addresses him as a Jew. The next step (*d*) answers (iii. 1 ff.) the question whether the Jew has had or has any advantage and privilege above the Gentile.

(*a*) The judge is judged (ii. 1–11).

1 Therefore thou art excusable, O man, whosoever thou art
that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou
condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same
2 things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is
according to truth against them which commit such things.
3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which
do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape
4 the judgment of God? Or despiseth thou the riches of
his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not
knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repent-
5 ance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart,
treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath
6 and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who
7 will render to every man according to his deeds: to them
who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory
8 and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them
that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey
9 unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and
anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the
10 Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and
peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first,
11 and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons
with God.

Turning to the Jew the Apostle addresses him through one of the main characteristics by which he was marked as he moved in the Gentile world. Everywhere he showed a sense of superiority which Gentiles found it baffling to understand and hard to bear. He despised their idolatry, kept aloof from their pleasures and amusements, and professed hatred for their sins. He moved about as a judge (ver. 1). And yet, Paul maintains, he does not

escape the judgment of God. For in spite of his attitude he does the same thing (ver. 2)—referring probably to the concluding list of sins in i. 28–32. Does he hope to escape the Divine condemnation (ver. 3)? Or is he simply despising not merely men, but even God and His goodness, in that he fails to repent (ver. 4)? He must remember that as impenitent he is moving towards the day of judgment which will descend on all men (vers. 5, 6). At that day, not men's privileges but their very spirit, their moral being shall be dealt with according to their actual and habitual life, either unto life or unto death. For God in that day will deal with all men alike on the same principle, whether Jew or Greek (vers. 7–11).

1. **thou art inexcusable.** R.V., "without sense." This refers to i. 20, and classes the Jew with the Gentile. **wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself.** The possession of the power to judge is a heavy responsibility. It implies that a man knows right and wrong, and is passing condemnation on himself, if he "practise the same things," R.V. (cf. Matt. vii. 1 ff.).

2. **according to truth.** We have abundant reason to be sure that God's judgment pierces to the reality of every man's life. Professions, appearances, privileges are stripped away, and against the sinner that Divine sentence stands.

3. **And thinkest thou . . . that thou** (emphatic) **shalt escape?** For the third time the hard and irrefutable statement is made, stroke after stroke, that the man who is here addressed practises the same things for which he says the Gentiles are condemned (cf. Phil. iii. 1 ff.).

4. **despisest thou.** In the original there is a

slight assonance of the words for "condemn thyself" (ver. 1) and "contemn" or despise God, here. The wealth of the Divine **goodness** or kindness of heart, **forbearance** or withholdiug of the righteous retribution (cf. iii. 25), and **longsuffering**, ought to be known to every man who sees and feels how long and how much he has sinned. He ought to know that the intended and appropriate effect is to produce in him a thorough change of mind, or **repentance.**

5. Questioning changes to accusation. Though the words are different, the idea of "riches" in God is contrasted with the actual "treasure" which the impenitent man is heaping up; it is not Divine goodness, but wrath! **day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.** Observe that as "righteousness of God" is revealed now unto salvation yet to be revealed (i. 16, 17), so "wrath of God" is revealed now (i. 18) unto a judgment yet to be revealed (ii. 5.) But every man should know on which journey he is moving, what "his treasure," the chief interest and object of his life, is.

6. Cf. Ps. ii. 12; Matt. xvi. 27. The fact of justification by faith does not annul the certainty of that final judgment.

7. **by patient continuance in well doing.** R.V., "by patience in well-doing." Or we might say, "in the patience of a good life-work." It is the sum of a man's long endeavour, the permanent set of his life. **incorruption.** This word lifts the **glory** and **honour** referred to from the earthly to the spiritual sphere. It is a favourite word with Paul (cf. Rom. i. 23; 1 Cor. ix. 25, xv. 42; 2 Tim. i. 10, etc.).

8. **contentious.** R.V., "factious." Perhaps there is a side reference to the faction-mongering efforts of the Judaizers (Phil. i. 17), who are in Ep. to Gal. (i. 6, 7, ii. 4, 5, 14, iv. 16, 17, v. 7) repeatedly mentioned in connection with the truth of the Gospel which they obey not (cf. Jas. iii. 14, 16). **indignation and wrath.** With R.V. reverse the order. The second word means the outbreak of wrath.

11. Though the Jew has been mentioned first, this is no breach of the great principle that God has no favourites. For the Jew is mentioned as first in relation to grace (i. 16) as well as to wrath; that is because his responsibility is proportioned to his privilege.

(*b*) The law of conscience (ii. 12–16).

12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish
without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall
13 be judged by the law; (for not the hearers of the law are
just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.
14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by
nature the things contained in the law, these, having not
15 the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work
of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also
bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing
16 or else excusing one another;) in the day when God shall
judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my
gospel.

Having mentioned both Jew and Gentile in relation to the Divine judgment, the Apostle faces the question, How can the Gentile be judged since he has not enjoyed the revelation of law which was granted to the Jew? (1) He asserts that if any

are without law, they shall, as sinful, perish in the same state (12*a*). (2) But the mere possession of the law is no safeguard, unless it is obeyed (12*b*, 13). (3) Those who, as the Gentiles, do what "the law" of revelation commands, reveal the fact that the law is implanted in their human nature (14, 15*a*), and their very discussions, explanations, and excuses show that they have this in their consciousness. (4) The Gospel makes it plain that God will bring these hidden facts to light in that day (16).

12. The Apostle insists that "sin" wherever found leads to condemnation and perishing. Sin can never under any circumstances meet the approval of God and receive eternal life. Hence, those who have had no law revealed, shall be judged as having had no law, while those who have had law shall be judged under that law. Whether any people can be said to have been "without law" in any sense, the Apostle does not say. He seems to believe the opposite (cf. i. 32, ii. 14, 15, v. 13, 14).

13. Cf. Jas. i. 22–25, also Matt. vii. 24–27. Luke xiii. 25–27. **shall be justified.** R.V. *margin*, "accounted righteous." This is called the "forensic" use of the word; God as judge will pronounce them righteous.

14. The people who have not received a revelation of Divine law as the Jews did, but whose life shows that they obey that very law, **the things contained in the law** (R.V., "the things of the law"), do them "by nature," and "are a law unto themselves." (Cf. 1 Cor. xi. 14, "Nature herself teaches us," etc.) It is significant that in referring to "nature" the Apostle agrees with such writers

as Cicero, who traced the laws of the state to "nature." Man has "from nature" right reason, the source of legislation; hence "to live from or according to nature is," he says, "the highest good."

15. The phrases of ver. 14 are explained here. Their work or course of conduct shows the law "written in their hearts." **their conscience** (cf. ix. 1). In Paul's use of this word (cf. 1 Cor. x. 25; 2 Cor. i. 12, iv. 2, v. 11; 1 Tim. iv. 2) we have the beginning of the great conception of conscience as the power of moral discernment. His references are still partial and initiatory. They do not express a philosophy of conscience, but its earliest stages. It appears (*a*) bearing witness with them (not "therewith" as in R.V.). For he like the ancients regarded conscience as the faculty of judging one's own past actions; (*b*) "their thoughts (*margin,* reasonings) one with another accusing or else excusing them" (R.V.). For their social intercourse was based on this process of scrutinizing the moral value of each other's actions.

16. This verse refers back to ver. 13. On "the day" see above on i. 18. **shall judge.** R.V. *margin,* "judgeth." The event though future is so certain that it must guide and control our present life, and hence the present tense is used. **the secrets of men.** Lit., "the hidden things." The word does not necessarily imply evil things. Its use in N.T. gives the feeling that reality is somehow "hidden." Hypocrisy or unreality is cured by "secret" deeds of right (Matt. vi. 4, 6) by remembering that a final revelation is sure (Mark iv. 22; Luke xii. 2). The real Jew is a Jew "in

secret" (Rom. ii. 29) (cf. 1 Pet. iii. 4; Col. iii. 3). "According to my gospel, by Jesus Christ" (R.V.). The idea was held in some Jewish circles that the expected Messiah would act as judge. Our Lord repeatedly asserted that the judgment of all men would take place through Himself (Matt. vii. 22, 23, xxv. 31–46). The Apostle Paul insists on it as part of his message (Acts xvii. 31; Rom. xiv. 8–12; 2 Cor. v. 10; Eph. vi. 5–9).

(c) The actual and the ideal Jew (ii. 17–29).

17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and
18 makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and
approvest the things that are more excellent, being in-
19 structed out of the law; and are confident that thou thyself
art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in
20 darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes,
which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the
21 law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou
not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal,
22 dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not
commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that
23 abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? thou that
makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law
24 dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blas-
phemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.
25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law:
but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is
26 made uncircumcision. Therefore, if the uncircumcision
keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircum-
27 cision be counted for circumcision? And shall not un-
uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge
thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the

28 law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither
29 is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but
he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is
that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose
praise is not of men, but of God.

In this passage Paul comes to close quarters with the Jew, addressing him directly and individually ("thou" ver. 17). There are two main sections, the first of which (vers. 17–24) contains four steps. (1) To begin with, he enumerates the real privileges of the Jew, and, as it were, their ideal use (17, 18); then (2) the attitude and claims which the Jew actually draws from these (19, 20). At this point the sentence breaks in its construction (see note to ver. 20), and the Apostle turns (3) to a series of questions which imply charges of sin (21, 22); (4) then (see note on ver. 23) he turns to direct assertion of their notorious guilt (23, 24). The second section (vers. 25–29) argues (1) that transgression of the law annuls the meaning and value of circumcision, while keeping of the law by the uncircumcised would bring upon him all that meaning and value (vers. 25–27); and (2) that the true relation with God is established from within and through the spirit, and not from the outward things of "the flesh" and "the letter" (28, 29).

17. **Behold, thou art called a Jew.** R.V. gives the correct reading, "But if thou bearest the name of a Jew." The change of reading may have been due either to accident (*itacism*—the change of two Greek letters into one) or to the effort to correct the broken sentence (see on ver. 20). "the name" or "the surname." **Jew.**

In general the name Jew had come to be used to distinguish that race from other races; the name Hebrew was often used to distinguish the Palestinian from the Greek-speaking Jews of the Dispersion; while Israelite was the name used to express their religious consciousness as the people of Jehovah. But Paul uses the names without close attention to such distinctions (cf. Gal. i. 13, 14, vi. 16; 2 Cor. xi. 22; Phil. iii. 5). **makest thy boast of God.** R.V., "gloriest in God" (cf. 1 Cor. i. 31; Gal. vi. 13, 14; and Jer. ix. 23, 24).

18. **his will.** R.V. *margin*, "the will." The word is used almost as equivalent to God, the Supreme Will. In 1 Cor. xvi. 12 read with R.V. *margin*, "God's will that he should come." **approvest the things that are excellent.** The R.V. *margin* gives the literal meaning, "provest the things that differ" (cf. Phil. i. 10), but that seems a poor claim for the Jew to make. Out of his power of seeing the right and the wrong must have arisen the boast that he knew the excellent things. **instructed** (cf. Luke iv. 18 ff.; Acts xv. 21; Gal. vi. 6).

19, 20. The Jew, through these divinely bestowed privileges, has become **confident** of a superior relation to all others. Compared with him they are blind and in darkness, foolish or mindless, and babes. **the form of knowledge and of the truth.** "possessing the truth in its precise formula" (Godet).

At this point the construction of the sentence (in the correct R.V.) breaks. The "if" of ver. 17 ought to lead to the conclusion—"One so privileged and so superior in his attitude, how

completely he ought to embody the law in himself and his conduct; but——"

21. The real condition of the Jew is revealed by four accusing question. He does not "teach himself," nor keep the comandments. He has even been known to steal treasure from heathen shrines.

23. This verse should not be a question but a conclusive assertion. By his transgression of the very law which he boasts of, he brings dishonour upon God.

24. The Apostle quotes freely and adapts Isa. lii. 5 (LXX). The longer passage in Ezek. xxxvi. 20–23 may have been also in his mind. It was a complaint of the Hebrew exiles that their captivity led men to deride their God for His weakness or for having abandoned them. Paul maintains that the sins of the Jews make the Gentiles blaspheme the God whose law they boast of.

25. **profiteth.** It is not said how it profits. Perhaps as an aid to faith, a symbol of consecration, an occasion of valuable historical sentiment. **is made.** R.V., "is become." The fact of circumcision accumulates all that shame upon itself which the Jew habitually casts upon uncircumcision, when the Jew is a transgressor of the law.

26. **the uncircumcision** uncircumcised persons. **ordinances** (cf. i. 32). This is written in the spirit of vers. 14, 15, 16. He is not speaking of Christian Gentiles. Even Paul seems to have had his "larger hope." **be counted.** R.V., "be reckoned," *i.e.* in the day of judgment or final reckoning.

27. **And shall not uncircumcision.** R.V., "The uncircumcision," *i.e.* the Gentiles. **by nature.** There is some difficulty about the relation of these words. It seems uncouth to speak of "the uncircumcision by nature"; unless we feel that the author was, while using these words, vividly thinking of "Gentiles by birth." Hence some would connect the words with the next clause—"if it fulfil the law by or from nature," *i.e.* instead of from the law (cf. ver. 14). **who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law.** R.V., "who with the letter and circumcision art a transgressor of the law." Paul means that the Jew broke the law while in possession of the written word which recorded it, and of the rite which pledged him to its performance.

28, 29. We need not discuss the exact form of translation here. The exact meaning is given under several good ways of articulating the clauses of the Greek, and this is one of them. The O.T. prophets emphasized this idea (cf. Deut. x. 16; Jer. iv. 4). **whose praise,** etc. "The very word 'Jew'—descendant of Judah—means 'praise' (Gen. xxix. 35). And such a Jew has his praise, not from man but from God" (Sanday and Headlam).

(*d*) The advantage of the Jew and the justice of God iii. (1–8).

1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of
2 circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto
3 them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith

4 of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true,
but every man a liar; as it is written, *That thou mightest*
be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when
5 *thou art judged.* But if our unrighteousness commend the
righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God un-
righteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.)
6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?
7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my
lie unto his glory: why yet am I also judged as a sinner?
8 And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as
some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may
come? whose damnation is just.

In this difficult paragraph there are four distinct and successive elements, the arguments being developed as if he were being questioned by an opponent. This method which Paul often employs would be natural to one who had entered on a career of controversy through a great controversy in his own soul. (1) First the assertion, in answer to a natural question which would arise from the preceding passage, that the Jewish race has had a great advantage in that it was made the depository of "the oracles of God" (vers. 1, 2). (2) Then the rebuttal of the idea that the unbelief of the Jews would disprove the faithfulness of God (vers. 3, 4.). (3) The refusal of one conclusion that may be drawn from (2), namely, that God would be unrighteous to visit wrath on those whose sin had commended the righteousness of God (vers. 5, 6). (4) The refusal of another conclusion that if evil-doing thus enhances the glory of God, we are free to sin for that very end.

1. Where then is the superiority of the Jew? For, not Jews only, but those Gentiles who were proselytes and admirers of the Jewish teachings,

considered them a privileged race. R.V., "What is the profit of circumcision?" referring to i. 25.

2. The second question of ver. 1 is ignored, and "circumcision" is omitted in the list of Jewish glories in ix. 4, 5. **chiefly.** R.V., "first of all." **because that . . . oracles of God.** R.V., "that they were intrusted with the oracles of God." Lit., "the sayings of God," the word probably suggesting chiefly the promises which the O.T. Scriptures contain.

3. **did not believe.** R.V., "were without faith." **the faith of God.** R.V., "the faithfulness of God." The Apostle faces the difficulty that because some Jews have rejected the Gospel to which those promises led up, God likewise might "break faith" with men. The very question can hardly be put, and he exclaims—

4. **God forbid.** R.V. *margin*, "Be it not so." Fourteen times Paul uses this phrase, as if it were a personal expletive of the repulsion which certain ideas create in his soul. (1) As to injustice in God as judge, Rom. iii. 6. (2) As to unfaithfulness in His dealings with Israel, Rom. iii. 4, ix. 14, xi. 1, 11. (3) As to the law defeating grace, Gal. iii. 21, or producing sin, Rom. vii. 7, 13. (4) As to the doctrine of faith leading to sin, Rom. iii. 31, vi. 2, 15; Gal. ii. 17; cf. 1 Cor. vi. 15. (5) As to boasting save in the cross, Gal. vi. 14. **every man a liar** (Ps. cxvi. 12). **mightest overcome when thou art judged.** R.V., "mightest prevail when thou comest into judgment." Paul quotes from the Greek translation of Ps. li. 4, which, however, differs from the Hebrew. He pictures God as himself judged by a hostile world, and sees that world forced (1) to pronounce that

God has fulfilled His promises (**in thy sayings.** R.V., "words"; cf. ver. 2); (2) to yield before the argument which proves God to be "true" and man false (cf. ver. 7).

5. **commend.** R.V., "commendeth." The word means rather to prove or sustain a fact (cf. Gal. ii. 18). **who taketh vengeance.** R.V., "who visiteth with wrath." **I speak as a man.** R.V., "After the manner of men" (cf. notes on Gal. iii. 15). Even before he repudiates the idea, he reminds himself that God is above "the measure of man's mind."

6. **for then how.** To conceive of an unrighteous God is impossible, for God's righteous judgment of all men is a foundation principle. To think otherwise is to cease to think of God.

7. **For if.** R.V., "But if." Ancient authorities differ as to the true text here. The balance is in favour of R.V. **hath more abounded through my lie.** R.V., "through my lie abounded." The argument passes from criticism of God to inquiry about man—"If I have served his glory, am I a sinner?

8. **And not rather.** R.V., "And why not" Paul conceives of some one asking this question, and at the same time records the fact that he had been falsely accused of teaching this very principle. **Let us do evil,** etc. (cf. Rom. vi. 1–23; Gal. v. 13). **whose damnation is just.** R.V., "whose condemnation." It is hard to think that Paul uttered this as a malediction on certain persons because they misrepresented him. (Gal. i. 8, 9, does not mean that. See notes there.) He means that any who make that principle the rule of life must be condemned And that is undeniably true.

Rom. iii. 9–20.

3. THE WHOLE RACE DECLARED GUILTY BY SCRIPTURE.

9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise:
for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that
10 they are all under sin, as it is written, *There is none*
11 *righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth,*
12 *there is none that seeketh after God.* They are all gone
out of the way, they are together become unprofitable;
13 there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat
is an open sepulchre; with their tongue they have used
14 deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose
15 mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are
16 swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their
17 ways: and the way of peace have they not known:
18 there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we
19 know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to
them who are under the law: that every mouth may be
stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.
20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be
justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge
of sin.

The Apostle now gathers up the double argument regarding Jew and Gentile (ver. 9) to a conclusion. He cites various passages from the O.T. which declare mankind to be in a state of sin and living without God (vers. 10–18). This proves that the legal principle or the method of works as pursued by all men has failed. It has only served to make the universal fact of sin universally known (vers. 19, 20). For mankind some other way out of darkness must be found.

9. **are we better than they?** R.V. gives the correct translation—"are we in worse case than

they?" The Apostle pictures the Jew in astonishment at the preceding argument, saying, "You said we had a great advantage (ver. 1), but you seem to be harder on us than on the Gentiles. Do they surpass us?" **proved.** R.V., "laid to the charge of." "By no means," is the answer. Both Jews and Greeks have already come under the same accusation, **that they are all under sin.** A powerful expression for the dominion in which sin holds them as slaves (Rom. vii. 14) or prisoners (Gal. iii. 22).

Vers. 10–18. These verses are made up of a number of citations from the Psalms and the Book of Isaiah. (See the *Commentary on Romans*, by Sanday and Headlam, pp. 77, 78, and Weizsäcker, *Apostolic Age*, Eng. Trans., vol. i. pp. 131 ff.)

10–12. These verses are taken from Ps. xiv. 2, 3, ver. 3 being given twice. The substance of ver. 3 there is, however, first given in ver. 10 here in a modified form, as a kind of heading or text for the whole passage, using the more definite and characteristic word "righteous" for "good."

11. Where the Psalm says "Jehovah looked down from heaven . . . to see if there were any that did understand," the Apostle simply gives the evident conclusion of that search—There is none who shows any moral sense or any desire for God.

12. **They are all gone out of the way.** R.V., "They have all turned aside." **become unprofitable.** The Hebrew word is used for milk turning sour. They have lost all value.

13[a,b]. The first two clauses are from Ps. v. 9.

13[c] The third clause (Ps. cxl. 3; cf. Ps. lviii. 4) emphasizes vividly the idea of treachery.

14. Cf. Ps. x. 7.

15–17. These verses abridge Isa. lix. 7, 8 from the LXX or Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. They are murderers who leave desolation behind them. Everywhere violence and not peace is the thing their souls love.

18. Ps. xxxvi. 1.

19, 20. The conclusion of the whole matter. **what things soever the law saith, it saith.** R.V., "what things soever the law saith, it speaketh" (cf. John viii. 43). **under the law.** As the above passages are not taken from the law of Moses, this word must apply to the O.T. in general as the announcement of the will and judgment of Jehovah (cf. John x. 34, quoting Ps. lxxxii. 6, and xv. 25, quoting Ps. xxxv. 19, lxix. 4). The Jews then are condemned by their own Scriptures for failure to keep the law addressed explicitly to them. **that every mouth may be stopped** (cf. i. 20, ii. 1). **and all the world may become guilty before God.** R.V., "may be brought under the judgment of God." The Apostle speaks as if the very people who might be found trying to ignore the situation are the Jews. The Gentiles are admittedly in sin. The Jews are now, in spite of appearances and protestations, proved to be like all others, answerable in the day of judgment to Him against whom they have offended.

20. **Therefore.** R.V., "Because" is the correct translation. The Apostle here states, and rests on, the universal principle (clearly stated in Gal. ii. 15, 16, iii. 21) that the effort to be righteous by fulfilment of the law is foredoomed to failure. "No flesh," *i.e.* no human being, is adequate to the task (viii. 3). "In his sight," in his dread

and holy presence none can ever be pronounced righteous on that ground. **for by the law** (R.V., "through the law," *margin*, "through law") **is the knowledge of sin** (cf. vii. 7). The word means a thorough and personal knowledge, a real consciousness of sin.

PART II. THE METHOD OF SALVATION.

(Rom. iii. 21–viii. 39.)

It has been pointed out already (Introduction) that the Apostle in this epistle has for his main thesis the fundamental Christian fact of justification by faith. This is not in his eyes an abstract doctrine reached by speculation upon the ideal or possible relations of God and man. It is the statement in briefest and simplest words of a new relation which has arisen in the midst of history, in the very experience of men, a new relation with God. Christ has wrought this immeasurable change, and faith is the human attitude through which it is realized in man after man, creating a new people, a new social group or organism, which is called the Church. It is this experience which now the Apostle proceeds to analyse in the following chapters (iii. 21–viii. 39). For an outline of this analysis and the manner in which it is worked out, reference must be made to the Introduction. It is our task now to follow it out step by step.

Rom. iii. 21–26.

FUNDAMENTAL STATEMENT: THE SUPREME ACT OF JUSTIFICATION, OR, HOW MEN ARE PUT IN RIGHTEOUS RELATIONS WITH GOD.

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is mani-
22 fested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even
the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ
unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no
23 difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the
24 glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through
25 the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath
set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,
to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that
26 are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I
say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just,
and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

This, like i. 2–6, is a brief passage in which every phrase is packed with meaning. (1) In the very midst of the world that has been proved sinful and unable to save itself, for "all have sinned," Salvation has appeared. The effective righteousness of God is now available for every man who has faith in Jesus Christ (21–23). (2) This means that every man who believes is justified, is now accounted in right relations with God, through a redemptive act which He performed in Christ Jesus (24). (3) That act consisted in this, that God used Him in His sacrificial death to demonstrate His own righteousness in spite of His long forbearance with a sinful race (25). (4) By the same act God demonstrated His righteousness, even when He accounts as righteous those who being confessedly sinful fix their trust on Jesus (26).

21. **But now . . . is manifested.** R.V., "hath been manifested." The Apostle uses this phrase ("but now") to mark the transition from the pre-Christian to the Christian relations between God and man in Rom. xvi. 25, 26; Eph. ii. 12, 13; Col. i. 26, 27; 2 Tim. i. 9, 10. **without the law.** R.V., "apart from the law." Lit., "apart from law." This does not mean, of course, apart from all regard to moral law as an expression of the holy will of God. But apart from "law" as an institution through which man has tried and failed to attain righteousness (cf. Phil. iii. 6, 7, where Paul says his own success before men was failure before God). **the righteousness of God** (see note on i. 16). **the law and the prophets,**—*i.e.* the O.T. as a whole. In the purpose of God the new and the old are connected, as a continuous revelation of His will.

22. **which is by faith of Jesus Christ.** R.V., "through faith in (*margin*, of) Jesus Christ." It is tempting to interpret this as the faith which Christ had in God and through which He conquered (cf. Heb. xii. 2). But there is no case where this use of the phrase by Paul is quite certain, and hence we must take it as "faith in Jesus Christ." **and upon all.** R.V. puts the words in margin, probably inserted later by copyists. **difference.** R.V., "distinction."

23. **come short of the glory of God.** R.V., "fall short." Lit. to lack or to be in want of food (Luke xv. 14), wine (John ii. 3), grace of God (Heb. xii. 15). It is uncertain here whether men are said to fall short of the ideal character of God (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 5, xii. 11) or to be without His glory, in the sense of His approval (John v. 44, xii. 43).

24. **being justified.** The whole usage of this word by Paul shows that it means not "being made righteous in character," but "being accounted as righteous" or "reckoned as standing in right relations." The subsequent argument in chaps. v.–viii. shows how men who start with being accounted as righteous become personally righteous. The word must be here grammatically connected with "all" in ver. 22, through "all" in ver. 23. **freely,**—*i.e.* for nothing, without purchase by man's labour. In Gal. ii. 21 the same words mean that, for the man who does not believe, Christ died "for nothing," *i.e.* with no result. **by his grace.** It is God's love, unmerited and unbought, that has prompted the whole series of Divine acts here described (v. 8). For the Apostle, "grace" is the source of all good, and it is love towards the unworthy, the morally unlovely. **the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.** The nature of the redemption is described in ver. 25. The word in another form is applied to the liberation from Egypt (Ex. vi. 6, etc.; cf. 1 Cor. i. 30; Eph. i. 7, 14; Col. i. 14). Here it means the process of redeeming which was wrought in and through the personal history of Christ Jesus, in the great act of His death (cf. 2 Cor. v. 19).

25. **whom God set forth.** The Apostle several times connects the will of God directly with the death of Christ (cf. Rom. v. 8, viii. 3, 32; 2 Cor. v. 21). The great deed was His and revealed His truly infinite love for us, sinners. The word "set forth" may refer generally to the act of offering Christ to the world in His death, or vividly to His being on the cross, hanging there, as it were, in the view of the world. **to be a propitiation.**

R.V. *margin*, "to be propitiatory" (see any good Bible Dictionary on "Propitiation," and cf. Heb. ii. 17; 1 John ii. 2, iv. 10). The word does not mean to persuade God to love men or to show mercy, any more than it means to propitiate man. It does mean that, for some reason not explained fully by the Apostle, the death of Christ (**in his blood.** R.V. "by his blood") was necessary as a condition of justification. **through faith,** or, through the faith, which was referred to in ver. 22 without the article, as the necessary human act through which the Divine righteousness takes effect on man's condition. There should be a comma after "faith," as in R.V., the phrase being parenthetical, and "in his blood" being connected with "propitiation." **for the remission of sins that are past.** R.V., "because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime." Paul does not say the sins of the past were remitted or forgiven, but, as it were, ignored or tolerated. God showed "forbearance," bore them as a burden, and in the death of Christ the righteousness of that "forbearance" is showed or demonstrated.

26. **at this time.** R.V., "at this present season," *i.e.* in the new dispensation which dates from the sacrificial death of Christ Jesus. **that he might be just, and the justifier.** R.V. *margin* refers to ii. 13 *margin*, where "just" is given as "righteous" and "justified" as "accounted righteous." We might translate "that he might be righteous and the righter of him that hath faith in Jesus." We speak of "righting" a man when he is restored to right relations, and that is the meaning of "justify." How the death of Christ both establishes or demonstrates the righteousness of

God and becomes the ground or means for "righting" men who believe is not fully explained. But we know from other passages (1) that Paul views death as the consequence or penalty of sin (v. 12, vi. 23); (2) the death of Christ as a sacrifice made by Him (Gal. ii. 20; Rom. v. 5; Tit. ii. 14) and a sacrifice made by God in Him (viii. 3, 32); (3) that the sinless One thus entered into an experience of the power and effect of sin, and displayed God's righteousness in the condemnation of sin (Rom. viii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. ii. 10 ff.). The principal writings of the N.T. agree in this (Heb. viii.–x.; John i. 29, 36; 1 John iv. 10; 1 Pet. i. 19; Rev. i. 5; cf. our Lord's own words, Matt. xx. 28, xxvi. 28). No doctrine of the Atonement can be true to the Christian consciousness at its origin and in the deepest phases of its subsequent history, which explains away or ignores this element, mysterious as it is. God's personal righteousness is involved in the sublime act of offering a universal pardon and confirming it to every one that opens his heart to it; and that righteousness, no less than the eternal love which lives and works in and through it, has been demonstrated historically, and so made effective, in the sacrifice of His Son on the cross. The awakened conscience, the heart aroused and responsive, sees it, while the heavier processes of logic fail to explain it.

Rom. iii. 27–31.

TRANSITION PARAGRAPH.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law?
28 of works? Nay; but by the law of faith. Therefore we

conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds
29 of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also
30 of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is
one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and
31 uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the
law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

It is often said that these verses form the conclusion of the whole preceding argument. They are much better viewed as marking the transition to the remainder of the epistle. In them Paul does indeed resume the fundamental ideas with which he has been working, but for a further end. The series of abrupt questions actually point forward to the whole course of discussion. First he names the new principle the "law of faith" (ver. 27), which he discusses in chap. iv.; then the justification "apart from works of law," the further issues of which in actual communion with God, he sets forth in chaps. v.–viii.; then the racial question (29, 30)—He is God of both Jews and Gentiles—which is the subject of chaps. ix.–xi.; and lastly the establishing of law (ver. 31), which is analysed thoroughly in the course of the argument of the middle chapters (v.–viii.) from various points of view, but which is applied directly and triumphantly to the actual conduct of believers in their social relations (in chap. xii. 1–xv. 13)—a section which significantly opens (xii. 1, 2) with language taken from "the law" and used of the Christian believer.

27. **Where is boasting then?** R.V., "glorying" (cf. ii. 23; Gal. vi. 13, 14). All self-confidence, all pride of achievement in fulfilment of law is once for all shut out of the human soul. And

this is done by the uprising in human life of a new principle or system, namely, **the law** (R.V., "a law") of faith. The Apostle does not shrink from this use of the word "law," unafraid of now being misunderstood. Faith, the humble and grateful receiving of God's mercy, is now the fundamental law of our true relationship with God. **By what law?** R.V., "By what manner of law?"

28. **Therefore we conclude.** R.V., "We reckon therefore," *margin*, "for we reckon." We should understand it to mean—All sense of merit is shut out, for we know as the result of our reasoning that one can now be set right with God apart from the ancient system of law.

29, 30. **seeing it is one God which shall justify.** R.V., "if so be that God is one; and he shall justify." The appeal is to the great fact that all races are from one and the same God (cf. Acts xvii. 24–31). He will certainly deal with all men on one and the same principle of justification by faith. **by faith . . . through faith.** R.V., "out of faith . . . through the faith." The change of prepositions is not significant. But "*the* faith" is emphatic and means that the same act is sufficient for Gentiles as for Jews. No other is demanded of either.

Rom. iv.

1. THE PRINCIPLE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

The Apostle begins with a question which seems remote from what he has been saying. That is sometimes his way. But as the argument proceeds and he penetrates deeper into the terms of the question, we are gradually led to the con-

clusion that faith in God, as the God of actual history, is and has always been the fundamental principle of right relationship with God, and that it reaches its climax of power when it is fixed on Him who in history has redeemed us by the deeds of the cross and the resurrection. The chapter has four main sections and a conclusion which deal successively with (1) faith as opposed to works (2–8); (2) faith and the institution of circumcision (9–12): (3) faith and the institution of the law (13–17); (4) the practical powers of faith; *Conclusion*—The Divine purpose binds together the faith of Abraham and that of the Christian man, and establishes justification by faith as the method of God (24, 25). The experience of Abraham and the remarkable utterance of Gen. xv. 6 were often discussed among the Jews (see Lightfoot on *Galatians,* pp. 158–164). Paul found it a valuable means for expounding and defending his gospel, as in Gal. iii. 6 ff. For the sense of religious relationship with, as well as natural descent from, Abraham lay deep in the Jewish consciousness (cf. Matt. iii. 9; John viii. 31–59).

(1) Faith and works (iv. 1–8).

1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as per-
2 taining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were
justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not
3 before God. For what saith the Scripture? *Abraham*
believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.
4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of
5 grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but
believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is
6 counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth
the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth

7 righteousness without works, saying, *Blessed are they whose*
8 *iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

1. Scholars are perplexed about the true text of this verse. Some manuscripts read, as A.V., **our father**; others, as R.V., "our forefathers." Some, as R.V. *margin* indicates, omit the words "hath found" and read "what then shall we say of Abraham our forefather according to the flesh?" The Apostle's question is not based on any one phrase or point in the preceding argument. Paul knew that Abraham's faith and the Jewish descent from Abraham were vital topics, and introduces them here as a means for elucidating "justification by faith" as God's method with all men, Jew and Gentile alike.

2, 3. **but not before God.** R.V., "but not towards God." If Abraham had found a way of "glorying" it could only have sprung from "works"—that is, from a righteousness of his own making. But in relation to God we know that this is impossible. Besides, the Scripture says that his righteousness came otherwise; for, **Abraham believed God** (cf. Gen. xv. 6). It is worth noting that in all his epistles Paul speaks seventeen times of Christ as the object of trust, only twice in Romans. Eight times it is God to whom faith is directed, namely, Gal. iii. 6; Rom. iv. 3, 17 (all quoting Genesis); Rom. iv. 5, 24; 1 Thess. i. 8; 2 Tim. i. 12; Tit. iii. 8; Col. ii. 12; cf. also Rom. x. 9. It is curious that no object of faith is mentioned in Epistle to Corinthians, except armour (1 Cor. xi. 18). Here the fact that "Abraham believed God," and that this fact was

reckoned unto him for righteousness, is cited as proving that "boasting" was impossible to him. "Works" means boasting; "faith" means humility.

4, 5. Another antithesis is put in these verses. The man who is righteous by "works" makes God his debtor; his reward is not a gift but a right. On the other hand, to him who gives up "working" for righteousness and abandons himself in faith to God, that very faith, in which all personal merit is disowned, is itself reckoned unto righteousness. "Works" implies wages and seeks to make God a debtor; "faith" sees in Him a gracious giver. **justifieth the ungodly.** Does not refer particularly to Abraham (cf. v. 6). It is a general principle that is here stated. Is means that in the act described, the individual confesses that he has been without God and is unworthy of the very thing which he accepts, namely, the reckoning as righteous.

6, 7, 8. **Even as David also described the blessedness of the man.** R.V., "pronounceth blessing upon the man" (Ps. xxxii. 1 f.). For "impute" here and in ver. 8 the R.V. uses "reckon." It is right to point out that "blessing" or "felicitation" is a truer meaning than "blessedness"; but the actual quotation is made in order to affirm that the supreme form of human bliss belongs to those who have received pardon, which implies for Paul the reckoning of righteousness instead of sin.

(2) Faith and circumcision (iv. 9–12).

9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only,
or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith
10 was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was
it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in un-
circumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.
11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the
righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircum-
cised: that he might be the father of all them that believe,
though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might
12 be imputed unto them also: and the father of circumcision
to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also
walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham,
which he had being yet uncircumcised.

To get the full meaning of this passage we must remember that the Jews had come to attach a supreme and even saving power to the rite of circumcision. Only the circumcised were children of Abraham. Whoever is uncircumcised "belongs not to the children of the covenant which the Lord made with Abraham, for he belongs to the children of destruction" (*Book of Jubilees*, quoted by Sanday and Headlam, on *Romans*, pp. 108, 109). This passage then, and others like it in Paul's writings, were revolutionary. They struck at the root of Jewish religion, as one of the deepest convictions of his own race. There are two steps in the argument: (1) When did the justification come to Abraham? *Ans.* While he was still an uncircumcised man (vers. 9, 10); (2) What was the purpose of this rite? *Ans.* Not to supplant the "law of faith," but to put the Divine seal

upon it, that he might be the father of all believers, whether they bear that sign or not (vers. 10, 11).

9. **Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only.** R.V., "Is this blessing then pronounced upon the circumcision." It is a bold question; for the quotation (v. 7, 8), which felicitates the forgiven, occurs in the midst of O.T. history, at a time when all were circumcised to whom it could have been addressed. The question must seem foolish to a Jewish reader, and Paul therefore promptly reminds us that it was "to Abraham his faith was reckoned for righteousness."

10. Now comes the telling blow. Abraham was reckoned to be righteous while he was still an uncircumcised man! (cf. Gen. xv. 6 and xvii. 9 ff.). The "law of faith" preceded the law of circumcision.

11, 12. Why then was he circumcised? Two answers are given: (*a*) The sign, circumcision, was a "seal"; it was an authoritative confirmation of the fact that through faith he already stood right with God. Note the use of "sign and seal" in description of the Christian sacraments. (*b*) But the Divine purpose **(that he might be)** reached beyond himself. He was destined to be **the father of all them that believe,** even though they be uncircumcised, and also the father, himself circumcised, of all those who **not only are of the circumcision,** but possess faith just as he had it before he was circumcised. No argument could more powerfully convince his readers that circumcision does not count for anything in the life of faith (cf. Gal. vi. 15), and hence it counts for nothing in respect of righteousness before God.

walk in the steps. A striking picture of a long line of descendants, like soldiers marching in file, in the path opened by this great leader of their race.

(3) Faith and "the law" (iv. 13–17).

13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world,
was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law,
14 but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which
are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise
15 made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for
16 where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is
of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise
might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the
law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham;
17 who is the father of us all, (as it is written, I have
made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he
believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth
those things which be not as though they were:

In these verses, which contain some difficult and obscure phrases and constructions, a further step is taken in the elucidation of the idea of faith. For circumcision, though partaking of a legalist character and afterwards embodied in the law, was yet instituted long before the days of the Mosaic covenant. Hence the need for more definitely contrasting law and faith. This is done through the use of that "promise" on which Abraham's faith fastened, and from which the history of grace took its rise. The promise of God was addressed to Abraham, and embraced "his seed" in its scope, not in relation to the principle of law, but

wholly and solely in relation to his faith and to theirs. If those who attempt to take their stand before God upon "the law" were to inherit, both faith and promise would lose their meaning and reality (13, 14). But it cannot be so. For it has been, and it is, of the nature of the law to confront men with wrath by bringing home to them the fact of transgression (15). Hence it is clear that the promise, flowing from grace, could only be addressed to, and take effect through, faith; and this with the intended result that all who believe God, in His omnipotence over death and the future, as Abraham did, should be counted as his seed, whether they were born under the law or not (16, 17).

13. R.V. keeps the better order and brings out the true emphasis here: "For not through the law (*margin*, through law) was the promise to Abraham, or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world," etc. Instead of appealing again to the historical order of these facts, the Apostle deals with the principles involved, on the one hand—law, works, wrath; on the other hand—promise, faith, grace. On the antagonism of these the argument is hinged. **the promise.** In Gal. iii. 8 this promise is called "the gospel," so directly and really in Paul's thought does the one will of God run through the ages (cf. Heb. xi. 8–16, 39, 40). **heir of the world.** This phrase is a kind of summary of the various promises made to Abraham, which, taken together, imply that through his descendants a spiritual dominion over all races would accrue to him (cf. Gen. xii. 3, 7, xiii. 14–17, xv. 5, 6, xvii. 7, 8, xxii. 15–18). **through the righteousness of faith.** Lit.,

"through righteousness of faith." The phrase has become almost a technical term, so soon.

14, 15. Cf. the argument in Gal. iii. 17–19. If legalists inherit, believers are vanity; if the law succeeds, the promise fails. But this is nonsense, for we know that law cannot succeed; its only product is wrath, since it is in a world of law that transgression appears.

16. The last part of this verse is most obscure. The meaning is best brought out by inserting two parentheses "not to that (seed) only which is of the law (and believes), but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham (apart from the law)." The Apostle evidently intended to say that the promise is available, in the purpose of God, alike for Jews who become believers and for Gentiles who become believers. They all have the right to say "Abraham is our father."

17. **as it is written** (Gen. xvii. 5). **before him whom he believed, even God.** Some would make the parenthesis begin with "who is the father of us all" of ver. 16, so as to connect "the faith of Abraham" with this clause. Abraham exercised his faith as in the very presence of God, before the face of Him whom he trusted. **who quickeneth the dead.** This probably refers to the fact named in ver. 19 (cf. Gen. xi. 12). **and calleth,** etc. (cf. Heb. xi. 3). But this passage does not refer to the creative act of God calling them into being. It means that God speaks of or names them. The Apostle's mind is fixed on the thought of "the promise." When men make promises they are necessarily dependent on many "ifs," and uncertainty is in the best of them. But when the Divine Promiser speaks He can

speak of things not yet here, as if already here, so sure is the fulfilment. Faith (cf. Heb. xi. 1) according to its energy does the same. Both for the promise of God and for the faith of man that which is in the Divine purpose already *is*.

(4) The practical power of faith (iv. 18–22).

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become
the father of many nations, according to that which was
19 spoken, *So shall thy seed be.* And being not weak in
faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he
was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of
20 Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God
through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory
21 to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had
22 promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it
was imputed to him for righteousness.

The last verse (17) leads the argument naturally to describe such faith as that of Abraham, as it takes hold of life and becomes a force in history. This is the underlying subject of Heb. xi. 1–xii. 2. Abraham was put to a severe test, for the promise had to do with his descendants at a time of life when he and his wife could no longer expect to have children. (1) The extreme difficulty of faith in such circumstances is brought out: "believed against hope" (ver. 18), "without being weakened in faith he considered," etc. (ver. 19). (2) The extraordinary power of his faith is set forth: "he wavered not," "waxed strong through faith," "was fully assured" (ver. 20). (3) The source of such

faith is in this that he fastened his mind on the promise and on the glorious power of God (vers. 20, 21).

18. **that he might become the father.** R.V., "to the end that he might become a father." The words express the effect of his faith and of the Divine purpose. They hover between saying "he believed that he would become" and "he believed so that he did become." **So shall thy seed be.** Memory must fill out the meaning of "so" from Gen. xv. 5.

19. **being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead.** R.V., "without being weakened in faith he considered his own body now as good as dead." R.V. *margin* omits "now." The omission of "not" after "considered" is correct. Paul explains the phrase "against hope" in ver. 18. Even though he attentively looked upon (cf. Luke vi. 41, xii. 24; Heb. iii. 1; Jas. i. 23) the fact that for the bearing of children both he and Sarah were dead, Abraham's faith did not weaken.

20. **he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief.** R.V., "yea, looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief." The R.V. brings out better the force of the words. For "wavering" in faith, cf. Matt. xxi. 21; Jas. i. 6. The word means to be divided in one's judgment, now affirming and now denying. **was strong in faith.** R.V., "waxed strong through faith" (cf. Heb. xi. 11). Unbelief did not make him waver, faith gave him power. **giving glory to God.** A Hebrew expression (Acts xii. 23; John ix. 24).

21. **being fully persuaded.** R.V., "assured."

The exact opposite of the divided judgment is that which is filled full with conviction.

22. **And therefore it was imputed to him.** R.V., "Wherefore also it was reckoned unto him." The Apostle returns to his thesis. This faith in God, so direct ("believed God," vers. 3, 17), so spiritual ("promise" and not "law"), so powerful, was the sole ground on which God counted Abraham as standing right with Him.

(5) Conclusion: the unity of Abraham's faith and ours (iv. 23–25).

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was
24 imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord
25 from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

23, 24. The Scripture records an act of God in Abraham's case which did not concern Abraham only (cf. Gal. iii. 8). Paul may have had in mind that Abraham's faith dealt with a promise which is now being fulfilled to believers. But his language refers explicitly to the constant correlative of the promise, namely, the faith which was reckoned for righteousness. That principle was not intended to end with him in whom it first came to light. **but for us also.** R.V., "but for our sake also." Paul views the whole story of the promise and the law as a living process in which the end was foreseen of God. And we looking back can see the end in the beginning, the one meaning that lives through all the stages (cf.

Heb. xi. 39, 40). **to whom it shall be imputed.** R.V., "unto whom it shall be reckoned." To us, who believe, it is to be reckoned. **if we believe on him,** etc. R.V., "who believe on him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead." Abraham believed that God would give descendants to one "as good as dead." Our faith is fixed on the same God, but in virtue of a deed of transcendent power already accomplished. Paul is always filled with awe and triumph when he thinks of the resurrection of Christ. It was a revelation of the majesty and omnipotence of God (Eph. i. 19; Phil. iii. 21), of the glory of Jesus as Messiah and Lord of all (Rom. i. 4; Phil. ii. 9–11, iii. 10; Rom. vi. 1–11, viii. 11), as the type and promise of our own triumph over death (Phil. iii. 21; 1 Cor. xv.).

25. **who was delivered for our offences,** etc. R.V., "who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification." When faith is fixed on God it is always with some meaning attached to His power. It is power with purpose that we trust. The purpose of God is revealed in His dealings with Christ. When He was delivered up to death (cf. iii. 25) it was in respect of our trespasses. When He was raised by the same authoritative and supreme will it was in respect of our justification. When we believe in God, therefore, it is as the God whose will concerning us is revealed, beyond our doubt or denial, in those supreme deeds.

We must not insist that Paul means here to restrict justification as the peculiar fruit of the resurrection. Justification deals with trespasses. He views the death of Christ as the act necessi-

tated, so to speak, by the fact of sin, and justification as the act which is possible only when death and resurrection have both been accomplished and proclaimed. Both the death and the resurrection have relation both to sin and justification according to the whole tenor of his teaching.

Note on Paul's exposition of Abraham's faith.

In this chapter we find that, while on the surface, and using the current media of religious thought, the Apostle has dealt with a historical event in its various aspects, he has really, *more suo*, been winding his way into the very nature of the great principle of Faith in its relation to the great act of justification. It is clear now (1) that faith is an act in which man disowns all merit and ceases to "work"; (2) that it is a universal principle which can be used by all men of every race; (3) that it faces God in His grace, and not as the lawgiver, whose will of grace began to be revealed once in a promise born of His power and His purpose; (4) that this power is power of life and death, and, while revealed in one way to an earlier life, is revealed supremely now in Jesus our Lord, whom it appointed to death and raised from death.

On the other hand, we know now (1) that justification means reckoning as righteous the man who has been ungodly and sinful; (2) that without any racial qualification in it, it comes upon, or is reckoned to, or in God's eyes, it describes the relation of the man who believes; (3) that as a way of dealing with man's relations to God it supersedes the promulgation and judicial enforcement of the law; (4) that this act of pardon and acceptance is exerted upon him who abandons

himself wholly to the power of God to fulfil his purpose of goodwill; (5) and, lastly, that this purpose is now addressed to us, in Jesus our Lord.

Rom. v. 1–11.

2. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH AND FINAL SALVATION.

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God
2 through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have
access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and
3 rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so,
but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation
4 worketh patience; and patience, experience; and ex-
5 perience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because
the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy
6 Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet
without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet per-
adventure for a good man some would even dare to die.
8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while
9 we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then,
being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from
10 wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we
were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much
more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.
11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord
Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

We have already seen that the Apostle Paul speaks of salvation as in its complete sense lying in the future (see notes on i. 16, ii. 5, 16). We have also seen that in the case of Abraham the faith which was reckoned to him as righteousness was directed through the promise to the future.

These facts naturally raise the question as to the relation of the Christian justification by faith to that ultimate salvation, in the future. It is a present act, conferring a present status before God. In it righteousness is reckoned actually and by God Himself to the believing man. But its meaning and power cannot be exhausted here and now, and it must have some relation to the day of judgment. In this paragraph the Apostle deals with some aspects of that question through two steps. (1) First he describes the emotional and volitional changes wrought in the believing man by this Divine act (vers. 1–5). (2) Then, taking up the idea of "hope" and that word "love," he unfolds the inner reasons for the great confidence with which the man who is now justified can look forward to the final salvation (vers. 6–11).

1. **Therefore being justified by faith.** Having stated the method by which justification through faith was made possible (iii. 21–26), and having illustrated and described it through the case of Abraham, Paul now takes up the fact as one of experience, both for his readers and himself (cf. the two preceding verses, with which this must be connected). **we have peace.** R.V., "let us have (*margin*, we have) peace." The question of the true reading here is very puzzling. The evidence of the MSS is overwhelming in favour of the R.V. But the internal evidence is quite strong against it. The difference in Greek is in one vowel—between ŏ and ō—and there are many passages in N.T. where the substitution of ō for ŏ by an error of copyists is quite evident. As the other verbs in this passage are in the indicative mood, it is better to take the reading of A.V. and R.V.

margin. And that especially because in Paul's usage the word "peace" includes the relations of peace *and* the feeling of peace, with emphasis now on one and now on the other. **with God.** It would be better to say "towards God." The Greek word is used by Paul (1 Thess. v. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 2, vii. 12; Col. iv. 5) for "the state of feeling towards some one" (Winer)—and we may add "the movement of will" (cf. Luke xxiii. 12; Acts vi. 1; Heb. xii. 4). The Apostle seems to mean both that a state of peace has been established, and that, being justified, our hearts move out towards God in peace (cf. Gal. v. 22 and the frequent benediction "grace to you and peace," Rom. i. 7, etc.). There is no passage in Paul's writings where "peace" is explicitly and indisputably used for the removal of the Divine condemnation alone. That is implied always, of course, but the Apostle prevailingly uses the term as the correlative of mercy (as in the opening benediction of all his letters), and in many passages the emotional element is prominent (Rom. xiv. 7, xv. 13; Phil. iv. 7; Gal. v. 22). The word is used in Eph. ii. for the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile.

2. **By whom also we have access.** R.V., "Through whom also we have had our access." This is a statement of the pre-condition of our "peace towards God." Christ has already given us an introduction (more formal than "access") into this grace. Our justification, our standing in right relations with the King of Glory, is the deed of Christ upon us individually. **and rejoice in hope.** R.V., "and let us (*margin*, we) rejoice." The A.V. and R.V. *margin* is better. That "introduction" gives us the right to boast

over or upon the hope which that "introduction" has awakened in us (cf. in contrast iii. 27). **the glory of God.** This can only refer to the day of the heavenly kingdom (cf. Tit. ii. 13, "looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God").

3. **And not only so.** This blissful state of justification does not free us from the burdens of this life. We (Christians) must count upon tribulations. But even in the very midst of them we still rejoice (not, "let us rejoice," with R.V.). We maintain our boasting, our glorious confidence. **tribulations.** While the word is sometimes used of persecutions (as 2 Thess. i. 4, 6), and sometimes in connection with persecutions, as describing the suffering which they involve (Mark iv. 17; Matt. xiii. 21; Acts xi. 19; 2 Thess. i. 4), it is also used of spiritual sorrow (Rom. viii. 35; 2 Cor. i. 4, ii. 4; Phil. i. 17). **worketh patience** (cf. xii. 12). We must not think of this "patience" negatively. The men who have pressed on through persecution have had the *endurance* of heroes.

4. **experience.** R.V., "probation." Neither word is exact, and probably we have no real English equivalent. It means tested, proved, "the temper of the veteran" (Sanday and Headlam). **hope.** So we come back to the permanent attitude, the emotion and determination of the believing man towards the future. But observe that this is "hope" after trial, the same hope that rose with faith and justification, but is now intensified and confirmed by endurance. Paul returns to all this in the end of chap. viii. (Cf. Jas. i. 2, 3, 12.)

5. **And hope maketh not ashamed.** R.V., "Putteth not to shame" (cf. Ps. xxii. 5, xxv. 2).

There can be no disappointment in store for the hope so awakened and so confirmed. **because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.** R.V., "hath been shed abroad." The word means "has been poured out of something," the implied source of it being the heart of God. It is not our love to Him, always variable and imperfect, but His love, ever full and rich and true, which is the foundation of constant hope. **in our hearts.** Not merely "into our hearts." Our hearts are receptacles which hold it. **by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.** R.V., "through the Holy Ghost (*margin*, Holy Spirit) which was given to us." The influence of the Spirit is dealt with later on in the Epistle (see on chap. viii.). It is not safe to assume that the Roman readers knew the story of Pentecost (but cf. Introduction), hence it is best to understand the words "which was given to us" as referring to the experience which came upon the early believers at their baptism (cf. Acts ii. 38; Gal. iii. 2).

6. **For when we were yet without strength.** R.V., "For while we were yet weak." On the correct reading of the first words in Greek there is much division of opinion among scholars. Many incline to a reading which both A.V. and R.V. have rejected, and which would be translated "as surely as," or "always supposing that." Then the connection of ideas would be: Our hope is sure, because the love of God fills our hearts, in presence of the fact accepted by us all, that Christ died for us. In viii. 3 Paul says "the law was weak through the flesh," and here we were "weak"—two sides of one fact, namely, that men were unable to do God's will. **in due time.** R.V., "in

due season" (see on Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10, and Rom. iii. 26). **for the ungodly.** Whether He died "in their room and stead" is not stated here. The emphasis is on the idea that He had them in His mind, and on their behalf went to His death.

7. The Apostle wishes to present the fulness of the love, the grace, the royal freedom and pitifulness of the Divine act on the cross. Hence he appeals to a general human instinct, by which we distinguish the righteous or dutiful man from the good man. While the former is admirable, the latter alone is attractive. Of righteousness we stand in awe, but goodness kindles our hearts. The R.V. *margin* "that which is good" instead of "a (or, the) good man" destroys the meaning of the argument.

8. If it is difficult to conceive of men dying for a righteous man, or even, as is not quite so difficult perhaps, for a man of attractive goodness, what shall we say of this love of God? For **God commendeth his love.** R.V., "his own love," *i.e.* he proves it unmistakably as being His and as directed upon us. **while we were yet sinners.** Who would die for a criminal, if hardly any would die even for the best of men, "the good man"? But Christ died for us when not only "weak" (ver. 6) (the word suggests contempt), but when sinful (and therefore objects of moral indignation). We must observe that it is the love of God which is thus "commended" in the death of Christ, who is the Son of God (cf. Rom. viii. 32).

9. **saved from wrath by his life.** R.V., "saved from the wrath of God through him." The Apostle is answering the unexpressed question, How shall we, who are justified now, stand in the

day of judgment? He answers, after the preceding statements about hope and love, about the fact of the redemptive death and the experienced justification (or reconciliation), that there is an inner logic, a moral force in the whole situation, a purpose connecting the first step with the final issue, which we must feel, and on which we must rest our confidence. That inner force or logic is expressed in the words **much more** (repeated in next verse), and is the very heart of our hope. **being now justified by** (R.V. *margin*, "in") **his blood** is a present and a glorious fact. We can conceive it, describe it, rejoice in it, as it is. But it is not the end; it is the beginning. It establishes relations which can only be fully realized when we are at last saved from the wrath of that day. **through him.** Christ is the sole medium through which God acts upon human nature and human destiny. He is the First and the Last.

10. **reconciled.** The Apostle never speaks of God as our enemy, though he speaks of His wrath. A judge is not an enemy, in any ordinary sense, of the condemned culprit. But Paul does speak of the relations of God and man as mutual in all their aspects; and this is indeed implied in that fundamental conception of the sacrifice of Christ which is common to most N.T. writers. Hence the power of this verse, "While we were enemies we were reconciled," can only mean that God, in His immeasurable love, provided the means by which mutual relations should be changed. We have received reconciliation as a gift (next verse) (cf. 2 Cor. v. 18–21). It made an infinite difference to God in His active relations with men that His Son had died for them. There the supreme

problem was decisively solved. "Much more" suggests that for God the future event is much less than the past. That deed "in his blood" made all the rest possible. **saved by** (or, in) **his life.** The living Christ is the pledge and the power securing that His death shall not be in vain. The doctrine of union with God is drawn out in chap. vi., and is a ruling conception of later epistles (Col., Eph., Phil.).

11. **And not only so, but we also joy in God.** R.V., "but we also rejoice (*margin*, but also glorying) in God." The reading in R.V. *margin* is correct, but A.V. gives the meaning. The Apostle returns to ver. 1 as if now there were more reason than ever to "boast" in our God. Not only a present status of peace, but a future of assured hope is opened to us through one and the same wondrous being, Jesus Christ, who is our Lord, the master and ruler of our life, the ground of our justification now, and the source of our completed salvation in the eternal world.

Rom. v. 12–21.

3. ONE SIN AND A WORLD OF DEATH, ONE DEATH AND A WORLD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and
death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that
13 all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world:
14 but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless
death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that
had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,
15 who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as

the offence, so also is the free gift: for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ,
16 hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto
17 justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus
18 Christ.) Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of
19 life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made
20 righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much
21 more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is one of those New Testament passages around which the greatest controversies have raged. In part these disputes are caused by the difficulty of interpreting the successive portions of the Apostle's argument. For the grammatical construction is unusually broken even for Paul; there are several ellipses; and various statements are made which seem to assume a background of beliefs now unknown to us. And in part the obscurity is caused by the fact that the various possible interpretations have become intertwined with great theological discussions regarding the nature and origin of sin. Yet the motive for the whole paragraph is obvious and simple enough. Having described the great principle of justification by faith, of redemption by the cross of Christ,

the instinct of the Apostle's great intellect is to give this principle a still wider and deeper setting than he had done in chap. iv., when he traced the living connection of Abraham's faith in the promise of God with the faith in Christ who fulfilled that promise. This fulfilment means in brief that One Person is the instrument of the world's salvation from sin. Through Him righteousness and life eternal are available for all human beings. Now the account in Gen. iii. does likewise connect the origin of sin and death with one man. In the providence of God these two facts stand out and challenge comparison both in their likeness and in their contrast. And the Apostle feels compelled to essay the task. Perhaps it is not rash to say that as the preceding paragraph has been looking forward to the great consummation, the final issue of human history, and of the redeeming work of God, it was a natural movement of thought which carried a mind charged with the instinct for wide and systematizing thought to go back to the beginning and consider the source of that sin, the salvation from which is to be so glorious.

12. **as by one man.** R.V., "as through one man." The Apostle assumes that his readers know and accept the story of Adam's sin, as told in Gen. iii., and that they are also familiar with the idea, which was not explicitly taught in the O.T. but was current in Jewish theology, that the universality of sin was due in some way to the first man's sin. **sin.** In this paragraph Paul twice thus personifies sin (ver. 21), just as he also personifies death (vers. 14, 17). In neither case would it be right to consider this as more than a form of thought or expression. Hence to identify

Sin with Satan is out of the question. He pictures Sin as a great force of world-wide influence, in order to make vivid the fact that the race, in some undefined way, has received a "set" in the direction of wrong-doing. **death through sin.** Undoubtedly Paul is thinking of actual and physical death. But also of much more than that. Death stands in his thought for all woe and loss—in fact, for doom. Here death is conceived of as a force which, in all the ranges of its dreadful meaning, reigns or is king over mankind, and obtained its sway by means of sin. But in ver. 21 the terms are reversed. Sin is there pictured as the king and death as the pervasive characteristic of his dominion. **and so death passed upon** (R.V., "unto") **all men.** Death went through the world as sin opened the way. **for that all have sinned.** R.V., "all sinned." We should read it, "because all men sinned." Here is one of the momentous sayings. How did death in Paul's view come to all? There are two important sets of answers. (*a*) All men sinned in some sense when Adam sinned. But in what sense? Here again opinions diverge. Some say that because Adam was the representative of the future race, whatsoever he did must therefore be counted for or against all men. He sinned, and his guilt is therefore charged to the account of all for whom he stood. Others, more realistically, say that as in Adam's own person the whole race was contained, it was inevitable that his offspring should inherit both the corruption of nature which sin entailed on himself and the relations with God which that corruption establishes, including the Divine wrath. Others, again, maintain that there

is here a kind of "mystical realism," such as we find in Gal. ii. 20, where Paul says, "I was crucified with Christ." The consequences of a great and crucial act, such as the first man's sin or Christ's redeeming act on the cross, are read back into the act itself and, as it were, identified with it. When Christ died all died (2 Cor. v. 14); when Adam sinned all sinned. (*b*) The simplest answer is that which takes the words in their obvious and grammatical meaning. Death passed through the race, because all members of the race, as a matter of fact, sinned. To be sure that leaves Paul in the position of having failed to explain the connection of Adam's sin with the sin of all men. Perhaps he was content to have it so.

13, 14. **for until the law.** Here begins the longer parenthesis. We have many illustrations of the way in which the idea of "the law" haunted the Apostle's mind. At one time his joy, it became his burden, then the obstacle between him and Christ, then the agonizing problem for thought when faith had triumphed, then the perpetual enemy of the gospel as Judaizing Christians pursued his steps, and always, everywhere, a feature of the Divine dealings with man which was difficult to explain, even to Gentile Christians. Evidently Paul conceives of sin as existing in the world in two forms, and both forms produce death. In the one form we have open transgression, as in Adam's sin and as in the case of those who lived under the Mosaic law. To all such sin is imputed or "charged" (same word in Philem. 18) explicitly. In the other form sin is present, as the universal reign of death proves, but it is not like Adam's sin. Paul does not define this matter any further

here. We must gather his opinion from other passages, as above, in chaps. i. 18–ii. 16. The difficulty here, as in ii. 12 ff., arises from the Apostle's uncertain use of the word "law." But his object is plain. He wishes to insist that both sin and death, which is universal and universally related to sin, must be traced back to Adam. **who is the figure.** R.V., "who is a figure." Lit., a type. In the N.T. the word ranges between the purely physical meaning of a mark or "print" (John xx. 25) and an example (1 Thess. i. 7; Phil. iii. 17); also used as a form or standard of teaching (Rom. vi. 17). Here Adam is taken as in some sense a picture or forecast of Christ.

15. **But not as the offence** (R.V., "trespass"), **so also is the free gift.** The Apostle almost shrinks from the comparison. He thinks at once of the contrast between the two and pauses to describe the difference of the "trespass" from the wondrous "free gift" of God, in a brief inner parenthesis. **for if . . . unto many.** R.V., "for if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many." He revels in the thought of the triumphant grace, which has conquered both sin and death. These appear as hated things which are swept away by things of glorious and Divine energy. There is no question of "type" here. There is in these respects only contrast between the work of Adam and the work of Christ.

16. Another contrast stands out between what came "through one that sinned" and that peerless "gift." **for the judgment . . . unto justification.** R.V., "for the judgment came of one

unto condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification (*margin*, an act of righteousness)." From one act of trespass God's judgment arose; but out of "many trespasses"—as they exposed the universal need of man—strange to say, God's free gift, an act of sheer grace arose, and instead of condemnation a verdict of acquittal was rendered.

17. Having, as it were, limited his use of the word "type" (ver. 14) in vers. 15, 16, Paul returns to the word "Death was King" to show the positive nature of that comparison. But the "antitype" can only be described so as to show how far it surpasses the type. Death became king over mankind through one sin (the trespass) of one man. But men now become kings "in life" through another "one" Person and His measureless gift.

18. **Therefore as.** R.V., "So then as." Here the Apostle returns to state the original comparison begun in ver. 12. **by the offence of one.** R.V., "through one trespass." **by the righteousness of one.** R.V., "through one act of righteousness." "On one side we have the cause, a single Fall; and the effect, extending to all men, condemnation. On the other side we have as cause a single absolving act; and as effect, also extending to all, a like process of absolution, carrying with it life" (Sanday and Headlam).

19. The comparison is repeated with emphasis on the words "disobedience" and "obedience." Of Christ's obedience, cf. Phil. ii. 8; Heb. v. 8, 9; John x. 18, xiv. 31, xv. 10. **made sinners, made righteous.** The word "made" is very unfortunate. "Constituted" is better, but the full meaning is, "considered and treated."

20. **Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound.** R.V., "And the law (*margin*, law) came in beside, that the trespass might abound" (cf. ver. 13). The same word is used in Gal. ii. 4 of the "false brethren" who "came in privily." They were intruders. The law has stolen into the situation created by sin, and has increased rather than diminished the amount of trespassing. The best commentary on this is Gal. iii. 19; Rom. vii. 7 ff.

21. The climax of the whole paragraph is here. **as sin reigned unto death.** R.V., "as sin reigned in death." Death is, as it were, the universal condition, the world where sin's power and character is exercised and revealed. **grace, righteousness, eternal life.** A new universe, a kingdom worthy of Him, **Jesus** the historic Man, **Christ** the fulfiller of the promise, **our Lord**—the One Divine and Living Power who holds us and our destiny in His hands.

Note on "Much More."

This phrase occurs four times in this chapter (vers. 9, 10, 15, 17). In the first two cases it is used to affirm a kind of spiritual logic, to express a degree of certainty derived from insight into the inner meaning or purpose of God in His saving work. It is a form of the argument *a fortiori*. It springs from the experienced fact of justification by faith, or reconciliation with God; it ends in the certainty that this experience must reach its consummation. It also springs from the historic fact that God's love has wrought supremely in the death of Christ for us, and it ends in the certainty

that such love must complete its work. In the second two cases the phrase passes from the less to the greater, or, at any rate, from the lower to the higher fact. Trespass and death are indeed facts of awful import; well might we consider them immeasurable. And yet they appear as having lost their infinitude, as having shrunk in their scale, when we gaze on the grace, and righteousness, and life which are overcoming and shall overcome them utterly and for ever. The one fact behind both sets of comparison, which gives life and force to the phrase "much more" is the will of God. The Apostle always argues on these matters as seeing Him who is invisible, as if feeling behind all the great powers of history from Adam to Christ, the reality of the Almighty Will of God.

Rom. vi. 1–14.

4. THE JUSTIFIED MAN AND THE NEW LIFE.

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that
2 grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are
3 dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that
so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were
4 baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him
by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up
from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also
5 should walk in newness of life. For if we have been
planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also
6 in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our
old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be
7 destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For
8 he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with
Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no
10 more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in
that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth,
11 he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves
to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through
12 Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in
your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts
13 thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments
of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto
God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your
14 members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For
sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under
the law, but under grace.

The Apostle now proceeds to deal with the life of the man who has been justified through faith, who is reckoned as righteous before God. Starting out from the question as to the Christian's relation to sin (ver. 1), he asserts that he has died to it (ver. 2), and proceeds to explain that statement, (1) by a reference to the symbolism of baptism by immersion, which repeats the ideas of death, burial, and resurrection. As Christ Jesus passed through these really, immersed believers passed through them pictorially (3, 4); (2) that symbolism rests on a real connection between His death and resurrection and the changed relations to sin and death of "us," *i.e.* who believe in Him (5, 6, 7); (3) justification implies that we in some sense "died with Him"; it implies that we are alive with Him now and for ever (8–11); (4) but our will is involved in this new life, we have an active part in it, and we must let the fact of our deliverance have full sway over our habitual volition (12–14).

1. This challenge connects with v. 20. The

Apostle could never have considered this a serious problem for himself. But it was probably suggested (*a*) by Judaizing Christians, or Jewish opponents, putting the worst construction on every phase of his gospel; (*b*) by Gentile converts, to some of whom the new world of moral and spiritual considerations must have been strange and confusing.

2. **God forbid** (cf. on iii. 4). **How shall we that are dead to sin.** R.V., "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" The reference, as the following verses show, is to the hour when the new and justifying faith was expressed and confirmed in baptism. That event marked the great crisis in which a man died to his past relations with sin and God, and passed into new relations with God and life.

3. **Know ye not.** R.V., "Or are ye ignorant." **Jesus Christ.** R.V., "Christ Jesus." This means more than baptism into the name of Christ (cf. Matt. xxviii. 19; 1 Cor. i. 13–15, x. 2), unless we understand "the name" mystically. It means that baptism was the outward act through which the faith of the convert was expressed. It is not a substitute for faith in his teaching; it could have no meaning or relevance without faith, as the whole course of argument in these chapters abundantly proves. Hence the symbolic expression of faith is here used, by a figure of speech, for the thing symbolized. **into his death.** This is the first element in the picture as Paul works it out with great originality and force. As men were plunged into the water outwardly, they had inwardly entered into the meaning and power of Christ's death.

4. **Therefore we are buried with him by**

baptism into death. R.V., "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death." This is the second element in the picture. In that "baptism into death," the moment of submergence under the water is taken as like unto burial. **by the glory of the Father.** R.V., "through the glory." This is the third element. Rising out of the waters is, however, taken for granted and not named. "The glory of the Father" is that outgoing of His power which wrought the resurrection of Christ. **in newness of life.** Here is the idea he has been aiming at. When the Christian believed, and when his belief was both expressed and sealed in the baptismal act, a purpose was in view. The wonder of that purpose is compared with the glory of the resurrection of Christ. It is a life whose quality is like that of a being raised from the dead.

5. **For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death.** R.V., "For if we have become united with him," etc. (*margin*, "united with the likeness of his death"). The R.V. *margin* is the literal translation. It is a difficult expression, but the Apostle means that if in baptism, with its imitation of Christ's death, our real engrafting on Christ is symbolized, then, no less really than we died with Him, shall we live with Him. If His death was real to us, and baptism is its likeness, His new life shall be no less real to us, and baptism is the likeness of the resurrection.

6. **Knowing this.** He appeals to their Christian consciousness. **our old man** (cf. Eph. iv. 22–24; Col. iii. 9, 10; also the phrase, "a new creation," Gal. vi. 15). "One new man," in Eph. ii. 15, has a different reference. **is crucified**

with him. R.V., "was crucified" (cf. Gal. ii. 20). **might be destroyed.** R.V., "might be done away." Same Greek word in Rom. iii. 3; Gal. iii. 17, v. 4; cf. Heb. ii. 14. There seems at first sight to be a violent coagulation of ideas in this verse. The centre of the thought is that the "sin-body" has been reduced to impotence by the fact that our old life, in all its aspects, died with Christ. It is probable that the Apostle is not thinking any longer of baptism. He is thinking directly of the cross and our interest in that, as at Gal. ii. 20. **serve sin.** R.V., "be in bondage to sin." The very meaning of that experience of dying to the old life was that our slavery should cease.

7. **For he that is dead is freed from sin.** R.V., "for he that hath died is justified from sin." Most think that Paul means that death in general ends all claims. The penalty is paid, and there is nothing more to be charged against him. But it is tempting to believe that Paul means, "he that hath so died," *i.e.* died with Christ, is cleared of all sin. The unusual phrase "from sin" (cf. Acts xiii. 39) has the effect of emphasis. Just because justification deals decisively with sin we cannot "continue in sin" (ver. 1).

8, 9. **Now if we be dead with Christ.** R.V., "But if we died with Christ." When in the act of faith we left the dead past behind, that very act contained the assurance of living fellowship with Him.

10. **For in that he died.** R.V., "For the death that he died (*margin*, in that he died)." **once.** R.V. *margin*, "once for all" (cf. Heb. vii. 27, ix. 12, x. 10). The Apostle does not explain how Christ "died to sin once for all." As Sin is personified often in this discussion, we may regard

this as meaning that in death He passed out of the dominion where Sin rules, and in which He though sinless (2 Cor. v. 21) had lived. He now lives in the dominion where God alone rules.

11. **through Jesus Christ our Lord.** R.V., "in Christ Jesus." This verse summarizes and applies the whole argument. The Christian man must be reasonable; he must reckon with the actual relations in which justification by faith has put him. The act of God has cut him off from his sinful past, and therefore from sin itself. That is a fact to be absorbed by each will in its own act of habitual faith. The same act of God has set him in new relations with himself because he is "in Christ Jesus." Christ is now his world, and in that there is nothing to live for but only God. (On the phrase "in Christ Jesus," see notes on Eph. i. 1; Phil. i. 2; Col. i. 2; and the note of Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, pp. 158, 159.)

12–14. These three verses partly continue and expand the exhortation of ver. 11, and also use phrases which suggest and then pass over into a separate argument in the following paragraph. It is not impossible that, having dictated the triumphant words of vers. 8–11, the impulse or echoing emphasis of the unusual phrase "the body of sin" in ver. 6 recalled him, perhaps with a reading of it by his "writer," to the relation of the new life to the bodily life. The sequence is very striking if we connect ver. 12 directly with vers. 6, 7.

12. **that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.** R.V., "obey the lusts thereof." We must note in this verse the recurrence of that word "reign" (cf. v. 14, 17, 21). The sway of this king is broken. His dominion, our hearts, is

invaded by "one mightier than he." It is for the will of the justified man, now "alive" in God's dominion, to deal with that tyrant's power (cf. the fuller truth on this in Rom. viii. 1 ff.). **the lusts.** Lit., the desires or passions. It is in and through these that Sin holds us in subjection.

13. For **yield** R.V. in both cases uses the more formal word "present." A difference of tense in the Greek expresses the idea—"Do not go on presenting," but "in one final act present." It is notable that in the second part "present yourselves unto God" is a necessary precedent to present "your members." In the old life the self was already yielded to Sin. The new outward life is begun by an inner act of yielding self. But there must be continuous exertion of will to realize that inner act in definite deeds. **instruments.** Both A.V. and R.V. put the correct translation "weapons" in the margin.

14. **shall not have.** The future here carries in it a feeling both of certainty and urgency. And here the true close of the paragraph is reached with a return to the opening question (ver. 1). Just because we are under grace, continuing in sin is now "morally" impossible.

Rom. vi. 15–23.

5. SLAVES TO LAW OR FREEMEN THROUGH GRACE.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the
16 law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of

17 obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that
ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from
the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.
18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of
19 righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because
of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your
members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto
iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to right-
20 eousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants
21 of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had
ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for
22 the end of those things is death. But now being made
free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your
23 fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the
wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The last phrases of ver. 14 present a new aspect of the same fundamental question. If the motive for "continuing in sin" stated in ver. 1 has been dishonoured, does there not arise this challenge—If you are no longer under law, nothing can be illegal, therefore nothing can be wrong? In that case the freedom of grace would mean the freedom to sin. The Apostle here adopts a very vigorous form of direct argument with his readers. Much light is thrown on the nature of the argument by the fact that the Apostle's deepest assumption all through, the major premise from which all his deductions start, is the absolute and unquestionable holiness and righteousness of God. That he will not for a moment consent to argue. It is the silent lord of all his thought. (1) First, the argument presupposes that we must be slaves of some power greater than ourselves (ver. 16). (2) The Apostle rejoices over the fact that his readers have actually

passed from the one form of servitude (to Sin) into another (to God) and repeats the exhortation of ver. 13 (vers. 17–19). (3) Lastly, he turns to urge the diverse consequences of the two forms of servitude, the end of one being death and of the other eternal life (vers. 20–23).

15. **God forbid.** Grace, not law, rules us, but the end of grace is the opposite of sin. "It is not restraint, but inspiration, which liberates from sin! Not Mount Sinai, but Mount Calvary, which makes saints" (Denney on *Rom.* vi. 14).

16. **Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey.** R.V., "to whom ye present yourselves as servants (*margin*, bond-servants) unto obedience." We must choose our master and we must obey the master whom we choose (cf. Matt. vi. 24; John ii. 34; 2 Pet. ii. 19).

17. In thanking God that the Roman Christians had ceased to be servants of sin, when they confessed their Christian faith, he emphasizes the unity of that **form of doctrine** (R.V. *margin*, "pattern of teaching") which they had obeyed **from the heart** with his own. The fundamental truths of the gospel were common to all the apostles, though disputes arose regarding the relation of these to "the law." **which was delivered you.** R.V., "whereunto ye were delivered." This teaching with its moral issues was a power. When it was delivered to men and accepted, they felt themselves delivered over into its influence, as a living force.

19. **after the manner of men** (cf. Gal. iii. 15). He apologizes for the form of his argument. Because he fears they may not grasp the great

truths, through the confusions arising from "the flesh," the seat of sin, therefore he is using these abstract terms as concrete, personifying sin and even righteousness (ver. 18). **iniquity unto iniquity,** —*i.e.* ever-increasing iniquity or lawlessness. **righteousness unto sanctification.** Righteousness is here again personified as at ver. 18, and as uncleanness and iniquity are personified. **sanctification**. Paul uses this term eight times, and in no instance is it clearly applied to the process of sanctification, or "progressive consecration," as Sanday and Headlam have it (*Romans*, p. 167). Three times besides here it is opposed to "uncleanness" (1 Thess. iv. 3, 4, 7). Once with faith and love as subjective qualities (1 Tim. ii. 15), once with "wisdom," "righteousness," and "redemption" as objective gifts of God in Christ. Once the phrase is "in sanctification of spirit" (2 Thess. ii. 13; cf. 1 Pet. i. 2). Here it must mean that personal quality of pureness in motive and life which flows from service of God.

20. The converse of ver. 18.

21. **then.** R.V., "at that time." An appeal to their experience. They know that when their conversion took place, shame for their past lives seized them. (It is an instructive fact that in missionary lands to-day the same "shame" often seizes the hearts of those who had been living "without law" or sense of sin, when they came under the power of Christ. They bitterly condemn their own past.)

22, 23. **death** and **eternal life** are the two "ends" of the respective forms of service. But a deep and significant distinction lies here: in that death is like the wages paid to a soldier whose

very members have been weapons (ver. 13) in the service of Sin, while "eternal life" descends as a gift from heaven, free and worthy of God, and bestowed once for all upon all "in Christ Jesus our Lord" (R.V.).

Rom. vii. 1–6.

6. ILLUSTRATION FROM THE LAW OF MARRIAGE.

1 Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the
law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long
2 as he liveth? For the woman which hath a husband is
bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but
if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her
3 husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be
married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress:
but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so
that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another
4 man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead
to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be
married to another, even to him who is raised from the
5 dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For
when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were
by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit
6 unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that
being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve
in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

The Apostle turns to another analogy to illustrate the deliverance from the grasp of the law and the freedom to serve God which has been wrought upon the Christian through the death and resurrection of Christ. Analogies are notoriously difficult to carry out in detail, and this one only applies in part. One obscurity arises because the word "law" is

used both for the law of marriage (ver. 2) and for "the law" of Moses in general (ver. 5). Another is caused by the fact that the wife is compared to the believer; yet in the one case the husband dies and the wife is free, while in the other case the believer has died and is united "to another" in freedom. Moreover, the Apostle leaves it uncertain to whom the believer was united before his death (ver. 4) until in ver. 5 he names "the sinful passions" as the power to which he was bound, under or "through" the law. (1) In the first verse the general principle is stated as one familiar to all who know the law (R.V. *margin*, "that know law"), that death cancels the claims of the law upon a man. (2) Then the illustration is given from marriage law, according to which a woman is bound to faithfulness to her husband until death. When her husband dies she is free to marry another (vers. 2, 3). (3) So with Christians. Their relation to a past dominion was broken, and "the law" which held over them in those relations lost its authority when, by union with His death, they became united with the Risen One. This union brings forth as its issue "fruit" that belongs to, and is worthy of, God. Hitherto "sinful passions" had ruled them, so weak and erring "in the flesh," "through the law," and from that union there sprang fruit "unto death" (vers. 4, 5). (4) Our bond with the law has been cancelled, since we "died with Christ" and passed out of the grasp of that which held us down. We are now free to serve God in and through a new spirit, and not in and through the literal prescriptions of an outworn "law" (ver. 6).

1. **Know ye not, brethren.** R.V., "Or are ye ignorant, brethren." **as long as he liveth.** R.V.,

"for so long a time as he liveth." The argument is to be based on a principle recognized by all who know what law is.

2. **by the law.** R.V., "by law." The reference is not to the moral law, but to law in general. Throughout civilization this principle was in some measure recognized, in however poor and one-sided a way it may have been applied. **she is loosed from the law of the husband.** R.V., "she is discharged." Sanday and Headlam hold this to be a technical use of the term "The Law of the Husband," as being a chapter or section of a code of laws.

3. **free from the law,**—that is, the restriction of that particular law ceases to apply to her case.

4. **become dead to the law by the body of Christ.** R.V., "made dead to the law through the body of Christ." The reference is to the atoning death of Christ with which at his baptism the believer became united (vi. 3–6). The language here might imply that "the law" is to the believer as husband to wife. But this is prevented by the language of vers. 5, 6. And yet it can hardly be that "the law" here means, as in ver. 3, the law of the union. It is better to leave the point, as the Apostle did, indistinct. **that ye should be married to another.** R.V., "that ye should be joined to another." The words mean simply that ye should come under obligation to another. **who is raised.** R.V., "who was raised." Throughout these chapters the point is never lost sight of, that the new relations in which men are placed by union with Christ through faith are living relations which issue in a new activity of life. The end of that loosing from the law and freedom is "fruit unto God."

5. **the motions of sins.** R.V., "the sinful passions (*margin*, passions of sins)." Here the Apostle seems to name the power to which we were before united, as wife to husband. These passions became our master "through" the law; they did work (R.V., "wrought") in our members, and the tyrant, Death, garnered the fruit.

6. **But now . . . were held.** R.V. is clearer—"But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were holden." Death has cut the bond between us and the power which held us down, and we are free from the law under and through which the bond was formed. **spirit, letter** (cf. Rom. ii. 27, 29; 2 Cor. iii. 6–8).

Rom. vii. 7–25.

7. THE MASTERY OF SIN AND THE MEANING OF THE LAW.

In this section the Apostle is driven to a still deeper consideration of the grasp of sin upon human nature and the function exercised by law in the Divine dealings with sinful man. It is best taken in two stages, the first of which defends the sanctity of the law, as an expression of God's will (vers. 7–13), while the second expounds the inner conflict which is set up wherever in human experience the holy law is known and the frightful force of inward antagonism to it is experienced (vers. 14–25).

(*a*) The function of law (vers. 7–13).

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not

known lust, except the law had said, *Thou shalt not covet.*
8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in
me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin
9 was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but
when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.
10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I
11 found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the
12 commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Where-
fore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just,
13 and good. Was then that which is good made death unto
me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin,
working death in me by that which is good; that sin by
the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

Throughout these verses we must watch the subtle dramatizing of the idea of Sin. (1) At first I was ignorant alike of sin and of law. But when the prohibitive commandment "Thou shalt not" reached me, a thousand evil desires awoke in me (7, 8). (2) For Sin was dead, and I lived unconscious of facts, until that commandment came. Then Sin sprang to life, and I was dead, killed, it would seem, by the very commandment whose purpose was life. For Sin used it as a weapon against me, deceived me by its means, and brought death upon me (9–11). It is evident then that Sin, by using the commandment in all its purity and beneficent intent to work out my death, stood revealed in all its own aggravated shame. And that was God's plan in the whole matter of the law (12, 13).

7. **Is the law sin?** This startling question arises from such statements as are made above in vers. 5, 6. The dialectic created by the experience of law and grace is subtle and relentless. Luther says somewhere that even the man who is long

schooled in grace will find the old puzzle about the law recurring to baffle him. **but by the law.** R.V., "except through the law (*margin*, through law)." The Apostle seems to refer to the general fact of law. Sin is discovered when a man is confronted with Law. **lust** (*margin*, concupiscence). R.V., "coveting (*margin*. lust)." **Thou shalt not covet.** R.V. *margin*, "lust" (Exod. xx. 17). The word so translated means wrong desire of any kind. The Apostle says he had not "known" sin, meaning that he had not realized it, or felt and seen its reality, unless "law" had been established. But, using a different Greek word, he had not "known" that there was such a thing as evil or forbidden desire unless a specific command against that had existed (cf. iii. 20).

8. **But sin . . . concupiscence.** R.V., "but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting (*margin*, lust)." How sin finds occasion, what base of operations it uses, is not named either here or in ver. 11,—probably it is "the flesh" (cf. ver. 5, viii. 3). **For without the law sin was dead.** R.V., "for apart from the law (*margin*, law) sin is dead" (cf. iv. 15, v. 13).

9. **For I was alive without the law once.** R.V., "And I was alive apart from the law (*margin*, law) once." Whether this means in his own childhood, or whether he is writing ideally of the childhood of mankind, is much disputed. It does not matter much. The Apostle is writing imaginatively of a real experience, which was not peculiar to himself. **sin revived, and I died.** A bold and striking metaphor. How often does a man die in

Paul's view? (1) When sin revives, as here; (2) when physical death comes (Phil. i. 20, 21); (3) when the whole doom of sin descends (Rom. v. 12; (4) when he dies on the cross with Christ (Gal. ii. 20); (5) when he dies in baptism (Rom. vi. 4, 8). How free and masterful is his mind and his use of the greatest facts and ideas of our human experience!

11. This verse is almost a repetition of ver. 8, as if he had turned aside in 8^b–10 and was drawn back by the echo of the half-military phrase translated as **taking** (R.V., "finding") **occasion,** or "using as a base." **deceived me.** R.V., "beguiled me." Sin used the commandment as a weapon, as the serpent did with Eve (Gen. iii. 13; 2 Cor. xi. 3). It is a familiar psychological fact that attention fastened on a prohibitive command tends always to stimulate temptation and hasten the very sin which the commandment condemns.

12. This is the answer to the question in ver. 7. **the law** is the general body of the Divine statutes, and that is "holy." The commandment is the individual rule or statute, and it is said to be **holy,** as proceeding from the pure will of God, **just** (R.V., "righteous"), as prescribing right relations and conduct, and **good,** as producing blessed results in human experience.

13. R.V. gives a laboured but more accurate rendering of this grammatically difficult verse: "Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shewn to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good:—that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful." The structure is clear if we insert omitted words and read, "But sin

became death to me, that it might be shewn," etc. That is, the hideousness of sin, its superabundant sinfulness, stands glaringly revealed, first, because it produces death, second, because it uses so pure and holy a thing as the commandment of God to do its fell work.

(*b*) The hopeless war and the deliverance (vii. 14–25).

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal,
15 sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not: for
what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.
16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the
17 law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it,
18 but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that
is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is
present with me; but how to perform that which is good I
19 find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the
20 evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I
would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth
21 in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good,
22 evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God
23 after the inward man: but I see another law in my
members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my
24 members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver
25 me from the body of this death? I thank God through
Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself
serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

This passage consists of a penetrating analysis of the consciousness of sin and the struggle against sin, of the inner self in moral conflict with itself. (1) Beginning with the fact of our twofold nature, he asserts that the law which each self recognizes is "spiritual," and is good, while the self that acts

contrary to the law feels itself like a slave in the grasp of an alien force (14, 15). (2) There is then, in a deep sense, a double Self—one which recognizes, approves, and wills the good, and one which persists in doing the evil, the fleshly self in which no good is found. I do the wrong and yet I attribute it to "sin which dwelleth in me" (16–20). (3) There seems to be a law beneath law in our life. For in spite of our approval of the law of God, the law of sin is triumphant over us and in us, as if some necessity ruled over the conflict of these two and gave victory always to the rule we hate (21–23). (4) The outcry for deliverance has been met by God gloriously in Jesus Christ our Lord (24, 25).

14. **spiritual.** In 1 Cor. xii. 1 ff. the Apostle discusses "spiritual things," *i.e.* things which come from the Spirit of God (cf. 1 Cor. x. 3, 4). The law is from the Divine Spirit. **carnal.** Lit., "made of flesh" (Greek, sarkinos). Paul's use of the term "the flesh" is varied. He never speaks of it like the Gnostics as inherently an evil thing. But it is weak and degraded, and has been made the instrument of evil passions (ver. 5) by the power of Sin, into whose hands we have passed as slaves.

15. **I do.** Lit., "I work out, or accomplish." **I know not,**—*i.e.* I do not recognize what I am bringing to pass. I am a slave and my deeds are not mine, and their meaning is lost to me. **for what I would, that do I not.** R.V., "for not what I would that do I practise." My heart is not in my conduct. **that do I.** As if to say, "The thing I hate I make." Three different Greek words for action occur in this verse.

16. R.V., "if what I would not that I do." His

inner will or wish really values the beauty or nobility of the law.

17. **Now then.** R.V., "So then." The strange and awful division of soul leads a man to say "I, yet not I." But this must not become an excuse for guilt. "A true saint may say it in a moment of passion, but a sinner had better not make it a principle" (Denney, *in loc.*).

18. **in me (that is, in my flesh).** How the Self is, as it were, divided and multiplied in this passage! It is true to the experience of all who have fought with sin. "In me, in my flesh, the good has no home!" The Self looks at its lower self, sees it seated in the passions of flesh, and condemns it—no fair thing is houseled there. **to will is present.** Good wishes are easy—the resolutions that rise and fall on waves of emotion; but the power to work them out or accomplish them—a man seeks far and near in vain for that.

19. The concrete restatement of ver. 15.

20. If my act is against my wish, who or what wrought it out? Not I, but Sin, the Apostle says, which has made its home in me.

21. **I find . . . with me.** R.V., "I find the law (*margin*, in regard of the law), that, to me who would do good, evil is present." A difficult verse to translate. R.V. unfortunately loses the pathetic force of the double use of "me" in the Greek—"to me wishing to do the right, to me the bad is at hand." "Law" here means either the law imposed by sin (ver. 23, "the law of sin"); or, the law (or necessity) of the divided self under which the right will is always beaten down by that evil force seated in the flesh, through which alone action takes place.

22. **the inward man** (cf. Eph. iii. 16). The inner or spiritual self by which the law of God is apprehended and approved of (cf. v. 14).

23. **another law.** R.V., "a different law." It is not merely one more law, but a law of another kind, whose presence and power, enforced as on a captive by Sin, is discovered in our bodily members (cf. vi. 19 ff.). Note the three different uses of the word "law" in this one verse. **of my mind** (cf. i. 28). The mind is the inward man.

24. "O wretched creature am I!" The outcry of helpless misery. **the body of this death.** A phrase of indignation and horror. The body in which the mind and inner man is imprisoned is the dwelling-place not only of sin but of death.

25. **through Jesus Christ our Lord.** As it is from Him deliverance has come as God's gift, so through Him our thanksgiving goes back to the heart of God, the Fountain of this so great and marvellous act of salvation. **so then.** The outcry of ver. 24 and the thanksgiving for deliverance are parenthetical, the heart breaking through the movement of reason. Here the conclusion of the whole argument is given, closely connected with ver. 23. We are left with the divided self.

Note on vii. 7–24.

Much discussion has arisen as to whether this passage describes the experience of Paul before or after his experience of Christ, or both; whether, in other words, it is the picture of an unregenerate or a regenerate man's experience, or whether it begins with the one and passes over into the other. It is possible to argue that the sense of the divided self

and the continuous defeat of the higher by the lower self, which is here so harrowingly described, can only be true for the man who is not born again, and for whom the dominion of sin has not been broken by the power and grace of God in Jesus Christ. On the other hand, it can be urged that the man who has had no taste of the Divine grace can hardly say that for him the law is good, that he wishes to perform it, that he delights in it as the law of God. The very fact that he fights is proof that a higher force than sin is at work within him, however hard the battle goes. Is it not better to read the passage as one which refuses to be set forth in this way as a definite succession of experiences at all? Who remembers when he was alive without law? What Christian, however saintly, can claim that the war has ceased, and that his ripened experience is that of a smooth control of all the higher over all the lower impulses of his nature? Only a Christian man could have written the passage as a whole, but in it he, as it were, abstracts from the power of Christ, while he considers the struggle of the soul with itself. It is true to human nature. Something of this fight is manifest in much non-Christian literature. The writings of Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus imply it. Wherever noble ideals have been in contest with selfish proclivities the inward man has been a battlefield. But the grace of God in Christ has done two things: it has made the conflict deeper, and it has assured the victory to the higher self wherever a man puts his trust in Him. It is this double effect of Christ's power which casts an apparent confusion over the question whether this chapter describes the regenerate or the unre-

generate man. The regenerate man is just he in whom the warfare is realized—and the victory.

Rom. viii. 1–39.

8. THE SPIRIT OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE JUSTIFIED MAN.

The Apostle probably paused at the end of chap. vii., reconsidered the course of his argument, and began this chapter with the thought and language of chap. v. echoing most powerfully in his mind. Of course the substance of the intervening paragraphs in which he met current difficulties about the law is in his mind. Many words and thoughts recur from them in this chapter. But in its form and its course of thought it connects with and crowns the argument of chap. v. The chapter can be divided into longer and shorter sections according to convenience. (1) The spirit of freedom and life (vers. 1–11); (2) the spirit of sonship (vers. 12–17); (3) the universal and the Christian hope (vers. 18–25); (4) further grounds of confidence (vers. 26–30); (5) the assurance of faith (vers. 31–39).

(1) The spirit of freedom and life (viii. 1–11).

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are
in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the
2 Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath
3 made me free from the law of sin and death. For what
the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,
ℵ God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,
4 and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the right-

eousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not
5 after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after
the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are
6 after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally
minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and
7 peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God:
for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can
8 be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.
9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that
the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not
10 the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in
you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life
11 because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that
raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised
up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal
bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Condemnation is past, justification is the experienced fact (ver. 1). But the state of justification implies the presence of a new force in the personal life, the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (ver. 2), of God (vers. 9, 11), of Christ (ver. 9), Christ Himself (ver. 10). For the purpose of God in sending "His own Son" was that a Divine force should enter into the warfare which was set up by the action of the law (vers. 3, 4). That force works in the "mind" and overcomes the energy of the "flesh" (vers. 5–9). The union with Christ which the Spirit creates results in this that "life" now works in us. And not only in our moral nature, for in our own physical nature its effect will be to perfect us with the victory over death after the pattern of the resurrection of Christ Himself (vers. 10, 11).

1. **There is therefore now.** This conclusion is not drawn from vii. 24, 25, but from the whole

position described in chaps. iii. 21–vii. 25, with, however, special reference to the positive exposition of chap. v. **no condemnation.** The latter half of chap. v. dealt with the fact that "condemnation" rests on all men, but grace has brought justification through Christ. "Condemnation" is indeed the finding of guilt, but it is an expression of the Divine will. For in God judgment and action are perfectly united. **in Christ Jesus.** Through faith men are inwardly united with Christ. (See note on vi. 11.) **who walk . . . the spirit.** Rightly omitted by R.V. (see ver. 4).

2. **For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.** In v. 14, 21 he spoke of death and sin as ruling over men. He also asserted that grace had begun to reign through righteousness unto eternal life (cf. vi. 23, vii. 6). He now calls our new ruling power the Spirit of life, which has set us free from the tyranny of sin and death. Another bold use of the word "law" appears in this phrase. As in vii. 23, it is personified. It is not quite the modern scientific idea of law, yet it is not merely statute law, that is in his thought. It is more like our modern idea of a force working according to its own character. And yet that character of the Spirit of life is "the law of God" (vii. 22) and "the law of my mind" (vii. 23). **hath made me free.** R.V., "made me free" (cf. v. 21, vi. 22, vii. 8, 23, 24).

3. **For what the law could not do.** The grammar of this sentence is broken and the exact construction much in dispute among scholars. "The thing that was impossible for the law," namely, the effective rebuke and destruction of sin, God has accomplished otherwise. **in that.** R.V. *margin*, "wherein." The latter is the correct translation.

The Apostle tells in what the failure of the law consisted—the flesh, as the seat of sin, was too powerful for it, as chap. vii. 7 ff. has shown. **his own Son** (cf. viii. 32, and the phrase "the Son of His love," Col. i. 13). Undoubtedly the Apostle is in these passages thinking of the Son of God as living in and with God before His incarnation, as having been "sent" to live under the conditions of human nature, as having been offered up a sacrifice "for sin." The pre-existence of Christ was no empty thought for Paul. It was for his faith a fact so full of content that the Divine meaning of His death was derived from it. A will, a love, a holy self of Divine glory from above time appeared in time for this great end. **the likeness of sinful flesh.** For the infrequent word "likeness," cf. i. 23, v. 14, vi. 5. Men under law have sinned "after the likeness of Adam's transgression." The Son came in "the likeness of the flesh of sin" (R.V. *margin*). This is Paul's way of saying that He became like us and yet avoiding the thought that He actually sinned. He lived in the flesh, under the conditions in which we have sinned (cf. 2 Cor. v. 21). **and for sin** (*margin*, "by a sacrifice for sin"). R.V., "as an offering for sin (*margin*, and for sin)." The Greek phrase "for sin" is used in O.T. as a technical expression for the sin-offering (cf. Lev. iv.). Paul conceives of the death of Christ as expiating sin. What he means by expiation we must gather from other statements, such as the next clause of this verse. **condemned sin.** In v. 16, 18 judgment and condemnation are related to men. But where God condemns destruction follows. Hence it is remarkable and significant that here it is not man or Christ who is, or can

be, said to be condemned. Sin is condemned on the cross in the death of the sinless One. This is a transaction between the holy will of God and the conscience of man. There Sin is at last revealed in its real nature through the sacrifical woe and death of the Son of God. The manner and the price of its exposure before the conscience of the world is an objective fact through which henceforth God deals with man in mercy and man with God in faith. **in the flesh.** The condemnation of sin took place in and through that common nature of Christ, which in other men had exalted sin and yielded to its deathly lordship.

4. **That the righteousness of the law.** R.V., "the ordinance (*margin*, requirement) of the law." Another echo of v. 16. The purpose of that sacrifice was that the law as "law of God" (vii. 22) should be fulfilled. **who walk,** etc. An amazing change from vii. 25. Now it is possible for the human will to order itself not out of the impulse of the flesh—"the law of sin"—but out of the spirit—"the law of the Spirit."

5. **after the flesh,**—*i.e.* those who make the fleshly desires the standard of action. **do mind.** Their whole thought and interest become absorbed in all that which ministers to these desires. The word "to mind" is a favourite with the Apostle, occurring about twenty-four times in his writings (cf. Rom. xii. 3; Phil. ii. 2, 5, iii. 15, 19; Col. iii. 2; also Matt. xvi. 23). **after the spirit.** One of the passages where it is not easy to decide whether the direct reference is to the higher side of man's nature, or directly to the Holy Spirit as the quickener of the higher life. The very ambiguity suggests that the author had both in

view. But the run of thought up to ver. 9 makes it easier to believe that he is thinking of the spiritual life of the Christian man in itself and on its human side, even though the feeling or assumption is present that it is derived from the Spirit of God.

6. **to be carnally minded.** R.V., "the mind of the flesh." **is death.** The habit of thought which springs from, and ends in, the flesh leads to death in all the dread meaning of that dark word. (See note on v. 12.) **to be spiritually minded.** R.V., "the mind of the Spirit." **is life and peace.** The habit of thought which is from and in the things of the Spirit yields "life" in all the glory of that word, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding (cf. Eph. iii. 16 ff.; Phil. iv. 6–9).

7, 8. **Because the carnal mind.** R.V., "the mind of the flesh." These verses give the reason for the contrasted results of ver. 6. **enmity against God** is inherent in the whole attitude of the mind set on fleshly things. It refuses obedience to his law, and is even unable to obey it. Such a life cannot possibly be approved of, and delighted in, by the God of holiness, the giver of the Spirit.

9. The Apostle, with the instinct for vividness and actuality at work, turns from the general and abstract terms of the discussion to address his readers. As if to say, Remember that in all this I am discussing real experience—your own, for instance, in Rome. **in the flesh, in the Spirit.** To be after and to mind the flesh or the spirit (ver. 5) is to be in the flesh or in the spirit. Each is pictured as a region wherein the self finds its

conditions, reasons, and ends of action. **if so be . . . dwell in you.** This is the antithesis to vers. 7, 8, though changed in form, by reason of the personal address. If the Spirit of God is at home in a man, pervading his inner life, enmity is at an end; the flesh is not his region of life, but rather "the spirit." **now if any man.** R.V., "But if any man." Instead of God (ver. 7) or the Spirit of God (ver. 9) the Spirit of Christ is used as another name for the same fact. The Christian consciousness for practical purposes makes no distinction. **he is none of his.** A variant statement of the enmity against God (ver. 7). Without Christ's Spirit a man does not belong to Christ, does not live in His world of thought, desire, and action.

10. **the body is dead because of sin.** The death discussed in v. 12–21 was death of the whole self. In vi. 3–7 a form of death is described wherein the "body of sin" is done away, through Christ's death and the believer's union with Him. This statement is best connected with the former passage, and there ought to be a comma after the word sin. For the Christian man the death of the body on account of sin is still before him, but the Spirit of God is life on account of righteousness. The salvation of Christ does not complete its work in this world, as the next verse shows (cf. v. 10, 11, 21). **Righteousness**—in every stage and in the whole meaning of the word as it is reckoned to a man through faith, and as it is realized in his character, through a life of faith and obedience.

11. The work of salvation will be completed in our resurrection (cf. Eph. i. 18–20; 1 Cor. xv. 35–57; Phil. iii. 20, 21). It is the supreme act

of God; it is to be done upon us as it was upon Jesus, the Man whom God raised from the dead; it is conditioned by our possession of the same Spirit which was in Christ Jesus and is in us as the very Spirit of life, which can and shall finally conquer death in the whole range of its effects.

(2) The spirit of sonship (viii. 12–17).

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to
13 live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds
14 of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the
15 Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba,
16 Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,
17 that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

We are bound over by the possession of the Spirit to manifest His moral qualities in our life (12, 13). Especially as this Spirit brings us into filial relationship with God, and urges us to call Him Father with intense joy in our freedom and in His grace who "adopted" us (14, 15). For it is His own Spirit that stirs this sense of kinship with Him and assures us of our glorious inheritance with Christ (16, 17).

12. **Therefore, brethren, we are debtors.** The thought connects directly with vers. 4, 5, but, as it were, passes through the rest of that paragraph to repeat in ver. 17 in another form the prospect

set forth in ver. 11. Not a blind impulse, but a luminous sense of moral obligation, rises within us. We are pledged to live after the Spirit.

13. Something must die, and we must choose what it shall be. If we use the might of the Divine Spirit to kill the doings or practices of the body, we shall live. We must be severe with our body, or God must be severe with our self unto death.

14, 15. The word for **sons** implies the idea of status and of privilege. At baptism the Spirit came upon them because they were constituted the sons of God as if by an act of formal "adoption." That Spirit released them from fear, as from bondage, and the dread name of God was changed into "Father." **we cry, Abba, Father.** A strong emotion is stirred which breaks out in words of intense love (cf. note on Gal. iv. 6).

16. **beareth witness with.** We are conscious that this is no forced claim of ours, no mere aspiration, no ungrounded assumption. The Spirit makes His presence felt as a Divine witness, confirming the witness of our own spirit,—or consciousness, as we would say (cf. ii. 15). **children of God.** This word, different from "sons" in ver. 13, implies the idea of kinship, rather than legal status. Those to whom that status is given (adoption of sons) find themselves His children in nature, in their spirit, the movement of their new volitional consciousness (cf. vii. 6).

17. **heirs of God.** For the full sweep of this inheritance now and hereafter, see 1 Cor. iii. 21–23. **joint heirs with Christ** (cf. Matt. xxi. 38, xxv. 34). **if so be that we suffer with him.** The inheritance begins among "things present,"

and they include suffering. The idea, though not the same Greek word, is present in Phil. iii. 8. But the word recurs in Phil. iii. 10 (cf. Gal. vi. 17; 2 Cor. xii. 10).

(3) The universal and the Christian hope (viii. 18–25).

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not
worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be
19 revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature
20 waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the
creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by
21 reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; be-
cause the creature itself also shall be delivered from the
bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the
22 children of God. For we know that the whole creation
23 groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And
not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits
of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves,
waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our
24 body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen
is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope
25 for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with
patience wait for it.

Laying hold of the idea of "suffering" (ver. 17) the Apostle proceeds to contrast the inevitable sufferings of the present with the final glory (ver. 18). (1) But to do this his thought suddenly opens to include within its sweep a cosmic view alike of suffering and glory. He sees "the creation," the whole of Nature looking eagerly for the unveiling of glory. For Nature has been united by God's judgment in that bondage in which man's sin involved him. The Apostle hears the sighing of Nature for deliverance and sees her in

pangs of expectation, since God in the midst of her bondage set the light of hope aflame—hope that shall be fulfilled for her also when freedom of glory shall be attained by the children of God (vers. 19–22). (2) These very children of God—"we ourselves"—having the beginnings of that deliverance planted in them, look for their share in that event through the deliverance of the body from corruption. Their salvation in its full sense is still in the future—a matter of hope, not of actual possession, an event to be awaited with the strong will of endurance which we call patience (vers. 23–25).

18. **For I reckon** (cf. vi. 11). There are times when we need to reason, and reason deeply, upon our situation. Our faith is not a blind impulse: it can give an account of itself (cf. viii. 38; 1 Pet. iii. 15). **shall be revealed in us.** R.V., "to usward." The glory of that day will break upon us as well as include us. The future tense is expressed in an emphatic form in the Greek, to mark the certainty of that event as in the Divine plan.

19. **the earnest expectation** (see note on Phil. i. 20). The term suggests "spectators straining forward over the ropes to catch the first glimpse of some triumphal pageant" (Sanday and Headlam). **of the creature.** R.V., "of the creation." **waiteth for the manifestation.** R.V., "the revealing." The modern doctrine of evolution deepens this poetic vision into a philosophic conception of the relation of nature and man. Nature is imperfect in herself, does strive forward towards a goal which is discovered in the structure and destiny of man.

20. **For the creature.** R.V., "For the creation." The emphasis in the Greek is on the word

"vanity." The reference is to the judgment expressed in Gen. iii. 17, 18, where God is said to visit man's sin even upon the earth from whose fruits he is nourished. It would be impossible, of course, to establish this from the modern interpretation of nature, which sees even death, in plants and animals, as one of the conditions of evolution. Yet in this sense also nature has been subjected to vanity in hope. There is direction even in her seemingly useless alternation of life and death, light and darkness, and all the circular movements which made the preacher cry, "Vanity of vanities" (Eccl. i. 4–11).

21. **because the creature itself.** R.V., "in hope that the creation itself." In *margin* the punctuation is as in A.V. **the bondage of corruption.** The contrast of that **glorious liberty,** or, better (R.V.), "the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

22. Paul sees the whole process of nature as if labouring in conscious pain, even as of a woman in travail, and takes for granted that others (**we know**) have the same insight.

23. **And not only they.** R.V., "And not only so." **the firstfruits of the Spirit** (cf. Eph. i. 12–14). The outpouring of the Spirit had produced many wonderful results in the experience of the first Christians—miracles (Gal. iii. 5), other gifts (1 Cor. xii.), as well as moral qualities (Gal. v. 22). Paul calls them all at most and best, but firstfruits. The very heart that has them groans or sighs in sympathy with all creation for more. That something more is doubly described. **waiting for the adoption.** R.V., "our adoption." We have had abundant proof of the power with which

the Apostle Paul conceives all the aspects of salvation as, to use a modern phrase, elements of an organic process. Adoption is a present fact (ver. 15), but here it is a future consummation. So redemption, which in Eph. i. 7 and Col. i. 14 is said to consist in the forgiveness of our sins, is here identified with the resurrection of the body. Observe that Paul here sees our body as the point of connection between nature and ourselves, both now and hereafter (cf. 1 Cor. xv.).

24. **For we are saved by hope.** R.V., "For in hope were we saved." He looks back to the beginning of the Christian life and sees hope arising there (cf. v. 1–5). **but hope that is seen is not hope.** Almost a play upon the word. When the thing hoped for is possessed, hope has passed into the joy of attainment.

25. **with patience wait for it.** For patience see ii. 7, v. 3, 4; and Luke viii. 15, xxi. 19.

(4) Further grounds of confidence (viii. 26–30).

(*a*) The spirit of prayer (26, 27).

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which
27 cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

26. **Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities.** R.V., "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity." The Spirit of God is a living presence within us, having His own mind

(ver. 27) or purpose and interest, and in the depth of our nature puts His will and mind at the aid of our weakness. **for we know not . . . as we ought,**—*i.e.* as necessity arises. Our weakness lies in our ignorance of the prayer that each need should prompt. **maketh intercession for us.** This Divine Presence in us takes our whole case and each need into His own interest, and in our groanings—our inexpressible and intense desires—He is pleading for us.

27. Our prayers at their deepest are not our own; and yet they are our own, for it is in our desire and emotion and will that the Spirit makes His mind known to God. And God sees in our hearts the pleadings of His own Spirit.

(*b*) The perfecting will of God (28–30).

28 And we know that all things work together for good to
them that love God, to them who are the| called accord-
29 ing to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also
did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son,
that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
30 Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called:
and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he
justified, them he also glorified.

It has been well observed that St. Paul in this passage takes his stand, as it were, at the close of the whole history of man and his redemption. He looks back and surveys the wondrous story of that Divine will which has converged "all things" upon one supreme end, and has without fault or failure passed from stage to stage in its accomplishment, until the lovers of God, the called of God,

stand in glory. Some of the difficulties of interpretation, or rather some of the dangers of doctrinal deduction from this passage will be avoided if we keep this in view. A similar experience arises when any biographer unfolds the life of some human will. As we look back over the completed story, it seems all of a piece. We see the veteran outlined in the youth, the child as father of the man. To imagine a break at any point of the story—one influence removed, one decision changed—would throw the whole into confusion. And yet he was living in conscious freedom, and spite of the linked chain of events which are his career, we know that his personality moved in and over them all with sovereign power. The story might and could have been different, though the secret lies in the bosom of mystery. Why not with God and man?

28. **And we know.** From the subjective experience just described the Apostle turns to the will of God. The ground of this knowledge he does not give. Partly he would no doubt find it in the Gospel of Christ, partly he would derive it from the very idea of God as Supreme Lord of all, which is an unargued assumption of all his writings. **all things work together for good.** R.V. *margin* says, "Some ancient authorities read—'God worketh all things with them for good,'" which would mean that God co-operates with those that love him. **who are the called.** R.V., "that are called" (cf. i. 1, 6, 7). Those who love God are those whom He has called (and brought) into His fellowship. **according to his purpose** (cf. Eph. i. 11, iii. 11). The purpose of God even with individuals is an eternal fact,

That purpose is secured through His control of "all things unto good."

29. **For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate.** R.V., "For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained." Looking back, as it were, from the day of glory, he sees that before all time God did regard or recognize those who in time would be His own. "To know" is in Biblical usage to regard favourably (Ps. i. 6; Amos iii. 2; Matt. vii. 23). **to be conformed to the image of his son.** R.V., "Son." This must refer not to the character of Jesus only, but to the glorious Being that He now is, as Risen Lord (cf. i. 4; Phil. iii. 21). **firstborn.** This word is applied to Christ in Col. i. 18; in Rev. i. 5 as "firstborn of the dead." And here it probably refers to Him as the first to triumph over death (cf. Col. i. 15).

30. **Moreover, whom he did predestinate.** R.V., "and whom he foreordained." The "call" is the realization in time of that eternal foreordination. It comes through the preaching of the gospel and all the outward agencies of God's love, as well as by the inner working of the Spirit. **justified.** The call was met by faith, and through faith (as the preceding chapters have explained) God reckoned men righteous. **glorified.** The intermediate steps are omitted. With one breathless flight of faith Paul sees the men who are put right with God in time carried with Divine certainty to their destiny, which is described here (and in other words in 1 John iii. 2) as being like the Risen Christ (ver. 29).

(5) The assurance of faith (viii. 31–39).

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for
32 us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own
Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not
33 with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay
any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that
34 justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ
that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at
the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for
35 us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall
tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or naked-
36 ness, or peril, or sword. As it is written, *For thy sake*
we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep
37 *for the slaughter*. Nay, in all these things we are more
38 than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am
persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor
principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things
39 to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,
shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which
is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In this concluding paragraph of his sublime argument the Apostle reaches the very crown of Christian certitude. He opens his statement with a series of bold, challenging questions to some of which he gives an answer. The burden of these questions is whether or not there be any power or authority which can daunt Christian faith, or cut the fellowship established in Christ between God and the justified man. (1) He starts out on the height, for, God being on our side, His love is already pledged in the sacrifice of Christ to complete His work in us and for us (vers. 31–32). (2) No one can bring any indictment against those whom God has justified; no one can bring judgment

down upon those for whom Christ died, for whom He now lives enthroned over all (vers. 33–34). (3) From the love of this glorious, living, and omnipotent Christ nothing can separate us, not all the creatures in heaven and earth, not the blind forces that could be named therein. Nothing can be conceived of that is able to intervene between God and the trusting soul. The love of God is pledged over all and through all and unto all conceivable issues in Christ (vers. 35–39).

31. **to these things,** referring to the sufferings which have been considered as a permanent element in Christian experience (cf. v. 35), but also referring to the other side of the situation, the love and power of God. The Apostle is gathering himself in this question for a final statement of all "these things." **If God be for us.** R.V., "is for us." He really means, Since God is actively on our side. This is the fact which stands out from the whole argument of the Apostle. It is the one fundamental condition of his life of which now the Christian man may be sure. It is the primary assumption from which alone he can now consistently survey the problems and tasks of his future experience.

32. **spared not his own Son.** There is an echo here of the words in Gen. xxii. 16, and the clause expresses in a guarded but significant manner the love of the eternal Father that brooded amid the agony and shame of the cross over "his own Son"; cf. note on viii. 3. The movement of the argument is the same as that in v. 6 ff. **freely give,**—that is, give out of His grace. **all things** (cf. v. 28; 1 Cor. iii. 21–23).

33–39. There is great difficulty in the punctua-

tion of this passage. R.V. text is the same as A.V. R.V. *margin* makes a continuous series of questions from vers. 31 to 35, by reading in ver. 33, "Shall God that justifieth?" and in ver. 34, "Shall Christ Jesus that died . . . us?" There is no final solution of this problem of punctuation. The most impressive way of arranging the material is to put a period at "justifieth" (ver. 33) and a capital at "Who is he" (ver. 34). In this way we have three questions followed by three answers, the third question (ver. 35) becoming a double one, as the spirit of challenge rises in the Apostle's breast, and the answer, after the parenthesis of ver. 36, being given in the final and triumphant words of vers. 37–39.

33. **lay to the charge.** A legal term implying the laying of an indictment against an accused person. **God's elect.** The word "elect" is to be traced back to the lips of Jesus (Matt. xxii. 14, xxiv. 22, 24, 31; Luke xviii. 7). It is applied to Christ Himself (Luke xxiii. 35); to believers (Rom. xvi. 13; Col. iii. 12; 1 Pet. i. 1, ii. 4, 9). But there is an undoubted echo here of Isa. l. 8, 9. **It is God that justifieth.** This is the answer to the preceding question — an answer of indignation at the idea that God's judgment of acquittal and release can be questioned or opposed from any source. There is no appeal beyond Him.

34. **Who is he that condemneth?** R.V., "shall condemn." As "condemnation" is in v. 12–21 contrasted with the work of Christ, it is striking to have the same contrast repeated here. **It is Christ.** R.V., "Christ Jesus." There is a wealth of adoration for His name when it is used thus in opposition to the idea of condemnation.

He, by His death, His resurrection, and His reign in Divine majesty, has broken the condemnation and the reign of sin, and no power can be conceived which can reverse this work and bring the soul again under condemnation. **that is risen again.** R.V., "that was raised from the dead." **intercession for us** (cf. Ps. cx. 1; Heb. vii. 25). With wonderful reserve the N.T. in various places refers to the work of Christ in the invisible world as of one who pleads at the eternal throne for those who are His own; but He pleads at the throne of love. His voice is, as it were, God's heart speaking to itself about our need (cf. Heb. ix. 24; 1 John ii. 2).

35. **of Christ.** R.V. *margin*, "Some ancient authorities read 'of God.'" The alternative reading probably arose from the desire to harmonize this verse with vers. 28, 29. The forms of suffering which are named in this verse were all familiar to the Apostle himself, and most of them are frequently referred to in N.T.

36. The quotation is from Ps. xliv. 23. The Psalmist emphasizes as a strange fact that his people are made to suffer for the sake of Jehovah —a bewildering fact which haunts much of the second part of Isaiah, and which leads up to the great conception of the suffering Servant of Jehovah. Matt. v. 10, 11 is the bridge between O.T. conception of suffering for righteousness and N.T. conception of suffering for Christ (cf. Matt. x. 18, 39, xvi. 25; 2 Cor. i. 3 ff., xi. 26 ff.).

37. This is the answer to ver. 35, and the Apostle coins a Greek word translated "more than conquerors" to express his overflowing sense of triumph; even in the midst of the terrible warfare

and anguish his soul enjoys a continuous victory. **that loved us.** The past tense refers to the supreme expression of His love on the cross (Gal. ii. 20).

38, 39. **For I am persuaded.** The Apostle gives his reason for the proud tone of ver. 37. He has not easily and lightly reached that inspired yet stern conclusion; he has faced the facts without and within, and his attitude is one not of blind superstition or impulse, but of deep and rational conviction; and hence he boasts himself, but he boasts himself in God. He knows that there is none who could stand against us since all the might and love of God is on our side. For the list of enemies named here, cf. 1 Cor. iii. 22, where some of the same are named as sources of blessing and possessions of the spirit. R.V. omits "powers." For the reference to "angels," "principalities," "powers," cf. Eph. i. 21; Col. i. 16; Phil. ii. 10. Some of these words appear to have been used in Gnostic circles to describe various grades of beings, such as they conceived of in the supernatural world (cf. *Commentaries on Ephesians and Colossians*). **nor any other creature.** R.V. *margin*, "creation." The Apostle, after having personified such abstract conceptions as height and depth which contain the feeling of enormous power, flings out this phrase, which simply means "nor any other created thing of any kind." Thus the soul that believes in the love of God is, as it were, lifted step by step beyond all other conceivable beings and set face to face with Him, gazing upon His love and filling itself with the glory that is unspeakable, which radiates from Him who is love. **which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

The Apostle knows of no other way by which the message of the love of God could have reached mankind than through Jesus Christ. To believe in it is not an easy, primary assumption of the human spirit. Both sin and death confront us perpetually, challenging the fact of that love, but in our Lord, who died to remove the sin and rose to conquer death, these final enemies of faith are put under our feet.

PART III. THE ELECTION OF ISRAEL.

(Rom. ix.–xi.)

In Part I. the Apostle set forth the universal need of salvation through his description of the universality of sin. In Part II. he has proclaimed the glorious provision which God has made in Christ for the removal of sin and the perfecting of all who believe in the life of glory hereafter. In this third part the Apostle takes a sudden and unexpected turn, and we have three chapters forming a continuous discussion of the relation of the Jewish race to the will of God. (For some remarks on the significance and appropriateness of this discussion, see Introduction.) In a sense, such a discussion has been prepared for by the numerous references in preceding chapters to the Jews and the Gentiles as coming to the gospel from different directions—the one through the law, and the other through a history which was not controlled by an explicit revelation such as the O.T. records. In chaps. i. and ii. he described the respective relations

of Jew and Gentile to the fact of sin. In the first verses of chap. iii. he paused to emphasize the spiritual advantages which the Jew still had by inheritance from a glorious past. Throughout chap. iv. it is assumed—and the assumption breaks here and there into statement—that the Jews as natural descendants of Abraham inherit the promise made to him, but that this promise is not conditioned as to its fulfilment by that natural descent, and in Christ has become available for all mankind. The great question, therefore, is not an idle one, but such as pressed for answer in every community where the Apostle had to teach, both to Jews and Gentiles, the one gospel of salvation through Jesus the Messiah. In these chapters three main divisions are usually recognized after the brief Introduction (ix. 1–5). (1) The problem is first regarded in the light of the Sovereignty of God, whose will is supreme over all His creatures (ix. 6–29). (2) In the second place it is regarded in the light of the responsibility of Israel, which is viewed as a real responsibility even though conditioned by the Divine Sovereignty (ix. 30–x. 21). (3) In the third section of his discussion the Apostle very boldly reconsiders the question whether Israel has been finally rejected, and through an elaborate but fascinating process of dialectics reaches the conclusion that even rejection can be made an instrument in the hands of God for blessing to Israel as well as to the Gentile (xi. 1–32). The argument closes with an outburst of praise to the wisdom of God (xi. 33–36).

Rom. ix. 1–5.

INTRODUCTION.

1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also
2 bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great
3 heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could
wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren,
4 my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to
whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the
covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of
5 God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of
whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over
all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

The Apostle opens his great theme through an outburst of emotion. He does not formally state the topic he is going to discuss objectively, but leads up to it through a revelation of his own deep agony over the situation with which it is concerned.

1. **I say the truth in Christ, I lie not** (cf. Gal. i. 20). This most solemn asseveration must have behind it the knowledge that he was accused of being false to his race, the hater of their religion (cf. Acts xxi. 20 ff.). **my conscience also bearing me witness.** R.V., "my conscience bearing witness with me." In ii. 15 the conscience of the Gentile is said to bear witness with himself. In viii. 16 the Holy Spirit is said to bear witness with our spirit concerning sonship towards God. This deep interior life of the human soul is here presented at another angle, for the Apostle speaks of his conscience as supporting him "in the Holy Ghost." Perhaps we may legitimately refer to viii. 26, where he describes the Spirit as con-

cerned with the believer in the deep agonies of his spirit life.

2. **great heaviness and continual sorrow.** R.V., "great sorrow and unceasing pain." The double expression does emphasize the intensity of Paul's pain.

3. **For I could wish that** (R.V. *margin*, "pray that I") **myself were accursed from Christ.** R.V., "anathema." (See note on Gal. i. 8, 9.) This very daring expression is justified only by the intense emotion in which the Apostle speaks. His eye is upon their need, his love is upon them as his brethren, and that spirit which took Christ to the cross wells up in him, wishing that he might even be doomed if only that might prove their salvation. **my kinsmen,** etc. Thus he identifies the "brethren" of whom he speaks as being the Jews and not Christian believers.

4. A summary of the extraordinary privileges which belong to his race, and which knit all members of that race together in an extraordinary love. **Israelites.** While the word Jew was used in Paul's time mainly to describe the race, Hebrew to describe the people of a certain tongue, the word Israelite was reserved for the religious consciousness of the people. It expresses their feeling of covenant relationship with the God of Jacob. **the adoption** (cf. Hos. xi. 1; Ex. iv. 22). **the glory** (cf. Ex. xvi. 10; Acts vii. 2). **the covenants,**—referring to the frequent reaffirmation of the covenant of God with His people (Gen. xv. 18, xvii. 2, 7, 9; Ex. ii. 24; Jer. xxxi. 31). **the giving of the law,** at Mount Sinai. **the service of God,**—that is, the worship which was carried on under the law. **the promises,**—namely, those

prophetic words which describe the Messianic age.

5. **the fathers,**—referring primarily to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.** R.V., "of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh." Undoubtedly the connection compels us to use the definite article and to say "of whom is the Christ?" for the Apostle here thinks of Him as the promised Messiah whom Israel had been taught to expect and whom Israel had now rejected.

A vast amount of literature has grown up in the discussion of the punctuation of this verse. It must be remembered that when the earliest MSS of N.T., which are all lost, were writtten, punctuation was practically unknown; and our earliest MS. of N.T. dates from the fourth century. Hence the first copyists who introduced punctuation had no more authority than any later students on a point like this. R.V. gives the possible varieties of punctuation as follows: (1) (In its own text) "Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever." (2) (With a full stop after "flesh") "He who is God over all be (is) blessed for ever." (3) "He who is over all is God, blessed for ever." (4) (With a comma after "flesh," and a full stop after "all") "Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all. God be (is) blessed for ever." There is least to be said for the fourth reading. The second and third are so similar that they may be treated for our present purpose as one. The choice, therefore, is between the text of A.V. and R.V., which make these clauses refer to Christ; and this alternative, either (2) or (3),

according to which the Apostle pauses to utter a devout exclamation concerning the supreme will of God, who has presided over the whole history of Israel, and indeed the world at large. (1) It is not possible without using the Greek to discuss the grammatical problems involved, but it is enough to say that while eminent scholars still regard this aspect of the argument as inconclusive, yet the weight of evidence in the penetrating argument of Sanday and Headlam would seem to incline the decision towards the text instead of the *margin* before us. On the other hand, important scholars feel that this balance is too slight to determine the question, especially with an author who was apt to break through the strict forms of construction, as we have so often seen the Apostle Paul doing both in Galatians and Romans when he was strongly moved. (2) No less inconclusive is the argument concerning the question whether Paul would use the term "God" directly concerning Christ. References to Acts xx. 28, Tit. ii. 13 carry no weight, as either the text or the meaning is in question in both of those passages. It is true that many passages could be referred to in which the divinity of Christ is most certainly implied, *e.g.* 1 Cor. xi. 3, xii. 4–6; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Phil. ii. 5–11; Col. i. 13–20. But it may be urged, on the other hand, that if Paul had so significantly used this expression here, he would have been much more likely to use it explicitly in those later epistles (Eph., Col., and Phil.), where he so fully refers to the Divine nature of our Lord. This would incline the decision towards the *margin* instead of the text before us. (3) Some interpreters urge that there seems no reason for any-

thing in the form of a doxology at this point, and that even in the modified form which it assumes in readings (2) and (3), it is intrusive. The present writer does not feel so. The whole passage is charged with intense emotion. The Apostle has enumerated the glorious privileges of his kinsmen in successive words which must have stirred him to the depths with a multitude of most sacred associations. He has at last named the supreme privilege, in that from that very race the Messiah has come according to the flesh. The reason for this tumultuous energy of style, which is present all through, is the fact that Israel has rejected the Messiah Himself, and God seems to be rejecting Israel. It is not in the least astonishing that he should reassure his own soul and express his devout faith by the assertion that He who is over all things throughout this marvellous mingling of glory and tragedy in the story of Israel, is the ever-blessed God Himself. This seems to the present writer the more natural explanation of the verse in spite of the grammatical difficulties, and he would incline to a choice between the second and third forms offered by R.V.

(1) The Divine plan is not followed (ix. 6–13).

6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.
7 For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither,
because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children:
8 but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which
are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of
God: but the children of the promise are counted for the
9 seed. For this is the word of promise, *At this time will I*
10 *come, and Sarah shall have a son.* And not only this;

but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our
11 father Isaac ; (For the children being not yet born, neither
having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God ac-
cording to election might stand, not of works, but of him
12 that calleth ;) it was said unto her, *The elder shall serve*
13 *the younger*. As it is written, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau*
have I hated.

With great delicacy the Apostle does not assert here directly that God has indeed rejected Israel, or that the Divine purpose has failed ; but in some form of it this is the assumption which lies behind the argument to which he proceeds. (1) He denies that God's plan has perished (ver. 6), though it seems to have done so. (2) He draws attention to the real method of God by recalling the fact that within the number of Abraham's children God chose one (Isaac) as the channel of His purpose (7–9). (3) Even among the descendants of Isaac a further defining of the method of God took place, for Jacob was chosen and Esau rejected as progenitor of the chosen people (10–13).

6. **Not as though . . . none effect.** R.V., "But it is not as though the word of God hath come to nought." "Word of God" is mainly used in N.T. for the gospel, but here it is applied to the express purpose of God in the choice of His people (cf. ver. 9). "Come to nought" (R.V.). The best English idiom representing the Greek would be "has not fallen through." **For they are not,** etc. (cf. Gal. iii. 7). The idea here is not that of i. 28 but rather this, that among the people called by natural alliance "Israelites" not all are called to be inheritors of the promise made to Israel.

7. Proof of the statement in ver. 6 is given here where the quotation from Gen. xxi. 12 shows that God made His promise to Abraham concerning the descendants of Isaac and not concerning Ishmael, who was as truly Abraham's seed as Isaac himself.

8. **That is, They which are,** etc. R.V., "That is, it is not the children of God." "Children of God" here must be interpreted not in its final and spiritual sense but in the historical. The children whom God has called to be the chosen people are not all those who are offspring of Abraham, but only those whose origin is to be traced back to the Divine promise made to Abraham and Sarah. These are alone **counted for the seed** (R.V., "reckoned for a seed").

9. **the word of promise.** R.V., "a word of promise." The emphasis in this clause is on "promise." **At this time.** R.V., "According to this season." The Apostle quotes Gen. xviii. 10, 14 in the Greek translation, where the words here translated "according to this season" meant originally "in a year's time."

10. **And not only this.** R.V., "And not only so." The Apostle clinches his argument by adducing a still further narrowing of the scope of Divine action. **but when Rebecca also.** R.V., "but Rebecca also having conceived by one." The emphasis here is upon the fact that one mother and father had two children, between whom, in spite of this close relationship, God again made a momentous choice. (An unexpressed reference lies here to the fact that Ishmael and Isaac had one father but different mothers.) **our father Isaac.** The Apostle though writing to

Gentile Romans identifies himself here with his people.

11, 12. The sentence which begins with ver. 10 is broken at this point and concluded in ver 12. **being not yet born,** etc. The Apostle emphasizes the fact that God's choice was announced in favour of the younger and against the elder of the twins before their birth, and was not, therefore, in any wise determined by their action or their character. **that the purpose of God according to election.** A very striking phrase, meaning that the purpose (cf. viii. 28) of God is characterized by absolute freedom on His part. His choice of instruments for His historical design is not determined by their "works"; it is not dependent upon the legalist principle, but springs from Himself, His own wisdom, His own love, His own determination. **him that calleth.** Almost giving to God the title "the Calling One," "the One that calls"—that is, the One that determines the place and task of every man, and appoints him to it, as He did when before their birth He said of Jacob and Esau that "the elder shall serve the younger" (Gen. xxv. 23).

13. Cf. Mal. i. 2, 3. We must not, of course, read into this verse any meaning that will represent God as inherently and eternally arbitrary and unjust. The prophetic word "Jacob I loved but Esau I hated" must not be translated into metaphysical or dogmatic forms. That, too, was an emotional because a prophetic utterance, and must be understood according to the mood and circumstances of him who spoke for God. The mystery of human fortunes undoubtedly lies in the Divine will, either there or in a universe of

accident. It is better in the long-run for faith, better for the human spirit, that it rest this inscrutable mystery in the mind and will of the living God than in the darkness of chance, or the gross darkness of impersonal necessity.

(2) First question—Is God unrighteous? (ix. 14–18).

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with
15 God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have com-*
16 *passion on whom I will have compassion.* So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that sheweth mercy.
17 For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, *Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared*
18 *throughout all the earth.* Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

The Apostle proceeds to discuss his great theme, concerning which he probably had frequent controversies both with Jews and Gentiles, by asking and answering questions much in the manner employed in chaps. vi. and vii. The first question is naturally suggested to every mind by some of the statements already made in vers. 6, 7. Is God acting righteously when He thus elects Isaac and then Jacob, rejecting Ishmael and Esau? Perhaps the suggestion of unrighteousness was strengthened by the bold language of the prophet Malachi, quoted in ver. 13. The answer which the Apostle gives (vers. 15–18) is simply a reassertion of the principle that God acts on His own authority, and that all mercy flows from Himself alone. Behind this there is, of course, a great conviction in the

Apostle's heart concerning God that He is the supreme will and that His will is supremely good and holy.

14. The form of the question in Greek—**Is there unrighteousness with God?**—is one that implies a negative answer, and the Apostle gives it with his energetic phrase, translated "God forbid."

15. The appeal to the experience of Moses is made with great confidence (Ex. xxxiii. 19, Gr. trans.). His readers will not question what was said to the great lawgiver. **I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,** etc. R.V., "on whom I have mercy . . . on whom I have compassion." The word for compassion is usually interpreted as conveying more emotion, more of pity and tenderness than that translated mercy. It is applied to God in Rom. xii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 3; Jas. v. 11.

16. Since the pity of God springs from His own will, the Apostle hastens to insist that it cannot arise from, or be caused by, any human conditions. The experience of it is not the product of our will, nor is it won by our earnest striving to deserve it. The word "runneth" is used frequently for effort prolonged through time (Gal. ii. 2; 1 Cor. ix. 24 ff.; Phil. ii. 16; Heb. xii. 1). **that sheweth mercy.** R.V., "that hath mercy."

17. Having drawn an illustration from God's dealing with the great prophet, the Apostle turns to draw another from the Divine method with Pharaoh. The Scripture quoted (Ex. ix. 16) describes God as addressing Pharaoh and announcing that through him, and even through his rejection of the commands of God, the name of God would be **declared throughout all the earth** (R.V., "published abroad in all the earth"). The Apostle makes a slight

change in the Greek which he quotes, using "raised thee up" instead of "made thee to stand." The original referred to the recovering of Pharaoh from sickness, but the Apostle applies the word to his whole career as a figure in history.

18. **Therefore hath,** etc. R.V., "So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth." The emphasis is very powerful on the word "he will" in each clause. The word "hardeneth" refers to Ex. vii. 3, 22, viii. 19, ix. 12, xiv. 17. The Apostle is clearly not attempting any defence of the righteousness of God, but insisting that God's will is the supreme source of human history. As this paragraph is only part of a prolonged argument it is irrational to isolate it and make deductions from these words as if they were in Paul's mind unbalanced by any other considerations. We shall see that, strong as the statements are in this place, he does modify them as his exposition moves on.

(3) Second question—God's will and man's responsibility (ix. 19–29).

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault?
20 For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art
thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say
21 to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath
not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to
make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?
22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his
power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels
23 of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make
known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which
24 he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath

25 called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As
he saith also in Osee, *I will call them my people, which*
were not my people; and her beloved, which was not be-
26 *loved.* And it shall come to pass, that in the place where
it was said unto them, *Ye are not my people; there shall*
27 *they be called the children of the living God.* Esaias also
crieth concerning Israel, *Though the number of the children*
of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:
28 *for he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness:*
because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.
29 And as Esaias said before, *Except the Lord of Sabaoth had*
left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like
unto Gomorrah.

The Apostle hears some one objecting that if God thus hardens and shows mercy as He will, then human responsibility is abolished, and he answers this in three successive statements. (1) He insists on God's unimpeachable right over man (vers. 19–21). (2) He proceeds to modify the unmitigated fatalism of these verses by showing that in His dealings with men God is not reasonless but moved by moral considerations (vers. 22–24). (3) In a series of quotations he finds confirmation for this point of view in the prophets of O.T. (vers. 25–29).

19. **Why doth he yet find fault.** R.V., "Why doth he still find fault." This is an irrepressible question, and one which his own preceding statement could not but elicit from any reasoning mind. **hath resisted.** R.V., "withstandeth." This word might be translated "is withstanding." The effect of it really is to raise the question—Who can withstand the will of the Almighty? The evil man is plastic material and can offer no resistance. The good man is also plastic material. Both, according to the premises, are alike in their absolute depend-

ence upon the resistless will of God. This, of course, is fatalism if it is carried to its logical issues. **his will.** The same word is used in Acts xxvii. 43, 1 Pet. iv. 3, and refers to a deliberate counsel and considered resolve.

20. The Apostle is not afraid of the challenge. He meets it with a series of questions which are almost defiant, and are certainly indignant, in their tone. **O man.** These words should come first in the sentence, for they emphasize the fact that he is addressing a creature and appealing to him as a creature. He is a **thing formed** (Isa. xxix. 16, xlv. 8–10, lxiv. 8 ; Jer. xviii. 6). In these passages we find the source for the illustration which is embodied in this and the following verses. Who can imagine clay arguing with the hand that shapes it?

21. In this famous figure the emphasis is upon man's utter helplessness under the inconceivable power of God. He surely has the right to choose what He shall make of each part of the human mass, as the potter chooses one portion of the clay for one kind of vessel and another for another kind.

22. So far the Apostle has not modified the position taken up in vers. 15–18 ; rather has he confirmed it with the emphasis of a striking illustration. His object evidently is to crush the pride of all who would claim any rights before God, and who refuse to yield themselves as material to His inscrutable purpose. In this and the following verses, however, a new element is introduced. God's will is a moral will with a purpose moving it, and does not therefore act in a merely unconditioned manner. **willing to shew.** The question

has been raised whether we are to interpret this as meaning "what if God because he is willing to show his wrath," etc., or whether we should read "what if God, although willing to show his wrath." The second is undoubtedly the true interpretation, for the first would introduce a contradiction in terms into this one sentence. The long-suffering of God stands in striking contrast with that moral indignation which He feels with sin, and that Divine impulse, may we say, to act with all His power upon His indignation. He has restrained this will and carried, as if it were a great burden, the continued existence of those who are called in terrible language, "vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction." On the long-suffering of God, cf. ii. 4, iii. 25. The word "fitted" is sometimes used for mending or restoring (cf. Mark i. 19; Gal. vi. 1); sometimes with the idea of completeness (1 Thess. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 12; Heb. xiii. 21). Observe that the Apostle does not say by whom they were fitted unto destruction; all he is concerned with is the fact that they are so fitted.

23. **and that he might.** R.V. *margin* omits "and." The construction begun in ver. 22 would be carried out if the word "and" were omitted. All editors retain it, even at the expense of the grammar. **the riches of his glory** (cf. Eph. i. 9–14). The Apostle here pictures the glory of God falling upon and bathing in its light the vessels fashioned for that great design. The words "riches" and "mercy" are frequently found in close association in the Apostle's writings. To him the wonder of the spiritual universe could only be expressed in the greatest terms of earthly

experience (cf. ii. 4; Eph. iii. 16 ff.). **afore prepared.** This compound word occurs again (Eph. ii. 10). Two Greek words in this verse occur also in Luke i. 17. The complete providence of God prepares all things necessary for complete salvation (cf. Matt. xx. 23; John xiv. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 9; 2 Tim. ii. 21). **unto glory** (cf. Rom. v. 1 ff., viii. 28–30).

24. **even us whom he has called.** R.V., "even us, whom he also called." Paul never hesitates to claim the whole wealth of God for himself and for all who have become believers in Christ; and he here returns to the fact that God has chosen for this great experience not only Jews but Gentiles. The will behind history has ignored the proud claims of unspiritual Jews. The same will has not shrunk from lifting to the highest level the slaves of idolatry.

25. The quotation in this verse is from Hos. ii. 23 (Gr. trans.). The original passage refers to the restoration of the ten tribes, but Paul (and certain Jewish scholars took this view) extends the principle of a merciful restoration to the Gentiles (cf. 1 Pet. ii. 10).

26. This verse is taken from Hos. i. 10. The Apostle supplies the word **there**, which it is impossible to explain in the situation which he is describing.

27, 28. **Though the number.** R.V., "If the number." **a remnant shall be saved.** R.V., "it is the remnant which shall be saved." These verses comprise a loose quotation from Isa. x. 22, 23 (Gr. trans.). The first clause (ver. 28) is in the O.T. most obscure, and was mistranslated in the Greek. Paul evidently uses the latter, changes it,

and then reads another meaning into the words as he adapts them to the idea that God has always limited the scope of His elective purpose as it pleased Him. **For he will finish . . . righteousness.** R.V., "for the Lord will execute his word upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short." The changes here are due to different readings in the Greek text. **because a short . . . the earth.** R.V. omits this clause entirely.

29. An exact quotation from the Greek of Isa. i. 9.

In this section of his argument the Apostle has been dealing with the question raised in ver. 19—How man can be responsible if God's will is absolute? It is quite clear that in the course of the three subsections in his argument he has not really met that difficulty. The quotations simply reassert his original proposition, and the nearest approach to explanation is to be found in vers. 22, 23, where he asserts that God in all His active will upon human history has observed moral conditions and pursued moral ends. How those are related to the original problem he does not explain.

Rom. ix. 30–x. 21.

2. HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY.

Throughout this discussion the Apostle has been fearlessly emphasizing the Divine sovereignty, and his statements, if taken alone, might well lead to sheer fatalism, but (and in this he followed the example of many Jewish theologians) he turns now to assert, as directly and sincerely, the fact of human responsibility in the very face of the providential

will of God. We may for convenience take his argument here in four stages. (1) In the first place he restates the facts which have given rise to the problem and finds that the Jews have of themselves rejected the provision of God's grace in Christ (ix. 30–x. 4). (2) Then he restates the fundamental opposition between the two great principles of law and faith with which he has been so frequently concerned in previous discussions, but which he here describes in quite a fresh manner (x. 5–13). (3) Three interesting verses are introduced which emphasize the need that this law of faith, the word of the gospel, shall itself be proclaimed. It is not a matter which the human spirit can discover, but must be brought to every soul as a message from God (14–16). (4) Then he returns to the dreadful fact which harrows his heart and which pervades the whole of this discussion with the sense of tragedy, namely, that Israel has rejected the proclamation concerning the Christ, and even this is illustrated by quotations from the O.T. (17–21).

(1) What are the facts? (ix. 30–x. 4).

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed
not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even
31 the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which
followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained
32 to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they
sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the
33 law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is
written, *Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*
x. 1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel

2 is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that
3 they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.
For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and
going about to establish their own righteousness, have not
submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.
4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every
one that believeth.

30. **What shall we say then?** With this question the Apostle returns to face the facts afresh from which the whole problem arises. **righteousness.** Four times in two verses is this word used, for it is the real subject from which every aspect of the problem has started. **followed not after** (cf. ii. 7). The Gentiles, even when pursuing lofty ideals, had no conception of God which could awaken within them the desire to stand right with Him personally and directly. The word "follow" is used elsewhere by Paul for the pursuit of good ends (cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 1; 1 Tim. vi. 11; 2 Tim. ii. 22; 1 Pet. iii. 11). But the word is frequently used in N.T. for the act of persecution. We use the word "prosecute" in a similar double sense. **have attained to.** R.V. omits "have." This and the preceding words are used together also in Phil. iii. 12. The fact is that the Gentile Christians, out of their condition of ignorance regarding "the law," have entered into right relations with God, and are righteous before Him, through the act of faith.

31. **which followed after the law.** R.V., "following after a law." Israel hoped, that is, to secure righteousness through law. **hath not attained . . . righteousness.** R.V., "did not arrive at that law." The fact is that Israel, not

Jewish Christians, but the people as a whole who have rejected Christ and still pursue the ideal of legal righteousness, have no right relations with God.

32. **but as it were by the works of the law.** R.V., "but as it were by works." The failure of Israel (ver. 31) is traced to the fact that clinging to the principle of law, through which it is impossible to secure righteousness, they neglect faith, from which alone it can arise. It would be better to translate, "Because not from faith, but as if it could be got from works did they pursue it." For the Apostle means that the latter method is inherently impossible. R.V. *margin* suggests another punctuation, "Because, doing it not by faith, but as it were by works, they stumbled." **For they stumbled at that stumblingstone.** R.V., "They stumbled at the stone of stumbling" (cf. xi. 9, 11). The offence of the cross is frequently referred to (cf. 1 Cor. i. 23). The word for "stumbling" means that they recoiled from the act of faith which the preaching of Christ crucified demanded of them.

33. These words are made up from the Greek translation of Isa. xxviii. 16 and viii. 14. In their original context they do not have a Messianic reference, but deal directly with the relations of Jehovah and His people (cf. x. 11). In 1 Pet. ii. 6 the words are similarly quoted, even with the same variations from the O.T. Probably both Paul and Peter drew them from some other source. The word "stone" had been freely applied by Jewish writers to the Messiah, and was so understood by early Christian writers (see Sanday and Headlam *in loc.*).

x. 1. **Brethren.** The Apostle pauses to express once more his intense emotion at the situation which he is discussing. The use of the word here, and the form of the verse, are taken as one of the signs or proofs that the letter is addressed to a Gentile community in which Jewish members may have been present as a small minority. **heart's desire.** R.V. *margin*, "good pleasure." The word so translated implies that the Apostle would have very great satisfaction in seeing Israel reconciled to God. The word, however, as used here, must carry with it the feeling of an intense desire, especially as it issues in earnest "supplication to God" (R.V.).

2. **For I bear them record.** R.V., "witness." The Apostle knows the attitude of the Jews in their hostility to the gospel thoroughly. He once felt as they feel and judged as they judge. He knows what it is to have their zeal for God (Gal. i. 14), and perhaps even remembers the sinister side of that zeal (Gal. iv. 17, 18). His desire for their conversion is, therefore, intensified rather than lessened by a deep understanding of, and sympathy with, their position. **knowledge** (cf. i. 28; iii. 20). The use of the strong word here would suggest that they did have a certain knowledge, but not that thorough degree of acquaintance with God which only the gospel has made possible.

3. Their inadequate knowledge springs from the fact that they do not know, that is, do not possess, the righteousness of God, and are going about "seeking to establish their own" (R.V.). The emphasis here is on these last words. The pride of the human heart drives them to seek righteous-

ness but not to accept it; to glory in their own achievement and not in that act by which God achieves it in them (cf. iii. 21). **have not submitted themselves.** R.V., "they did not subject themselves." These words suggest a stubbornness with which they have sought to stand on their own feet before God, instead of kneeling before the law of faith which He has imposed upon mankind, and whose operation and issue have been brought to light in Christ.

4. **the end of the law.** In the Greek these words are first, and are most emphatic. The coming of Christ has put an end to law; not merely the law of Moses, but the very principle of legalism; and Christ has swept that away in order that righteousness may come to every believer and to him alone. No words could more powerfully express the Apostle's conviction regarding the essence of Christianity.

(2) The principles of law and faith (x. 5–13).

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law,
that the man which doeth those things shall live by them.
6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this
wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?
7 (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall
descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again
8 from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh
thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the
9 word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess
with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine
heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt
10 be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto
righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto

11 salvation. For the Scripture saith, *Whosoever believeth on*
12 *him shall not be ashamed.* For there is no difference
between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over
13 all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall
call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

In this passage the Apostle sets forth the contrast between the gospel and the law "in language drawn from the O.T. which had become proverbial."

5. **For Moses . . . shall live by them.** R.V., "For Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby." **Moses.** He appeals, as in ix. 15, to the supreme authority for the Jewish mind (see Lev. xviii. 5; cf. Gal. iii. 12). **shall live by them.** These words in the original passage refer to the statutes and judgments there set forth, but R.V. rightly restricts them to "the righteousness" which is the central word of the sentence as Paul quotes it. Paul assumes the impossibility of attaining righteousness without dependence on God. The O.T. religion did, of course, reveal God, and those who depended upon Him were conscious of righteousness before Him, as psalmists and prophets abundantly show.

6, 7. The Apostle in these verses quotes the well-known phrases found in Deut. xxx. 11–14, with a phrase found in Deut. viii. 17, ix. 4. He does not cite these formally, but makes free literary use of them, transferring to the gospel what is there uttered in reference to the law of Jehovah. **the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise.** R.V., "saith thus." "Faith-righteousness" is, as it were, personified and pictured in the act of uttering the ancient words.

Say not in thine heart (cf. Deut. viii. 17, ix. 4). The context in the latter passage is instructive. **Who shall ascend into heaven? . . . Who shall descend into the deep?** R.V., "into the abyss." The latter phrase the Apostle substitutes for the words in Deuteronomy, "He will go over to the further side of the sea," adapting them to his immediate purpose. On "abyss," cf. Luke viii. 31; Rev. ix. 1, xx. 1, 3. On Christ's descent into Hades, see Acts ii. 27; 1 Pet. iii. 19, iv. 6. The Apostle in these verses pictures faith-righteousness as addressing the human soul, which is searching in heaven above and in the deep below for the secret of righteousness before God. He means to say that already Christ has come down; already Christ has been raised from the dead; already, that is, the revelation of God and the conquest of death have become facts on which every man's faith may fasten.

8. **But what saith it?** The gospel, which is the message concerning faith-righteousness, announces to man that heaven is within their reach. The quotation is from Deut. xxx. 14. **the word of faith,**—*i.e.* the message concerning faith.

9. **that if.** R.V., "because if." **confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus.** R.V., "confess with thy mouth Jesus *as* Lord (*margin*, confess the word with thy mouth, that Jesus *is* Lord)." The alternative translation of R.V. is due to a difference of reading in the Greek text. **Jesus as Lord.** This is the supreme fact for the Christian consciousness. The Apostle in this and the following verse does not mean to contrast confession and belief: "the antithesis is one of style" (B. Jowett). The full Christian experience requires

both the inward act of faith and the outward expression of it. **God hath raised him** (cf. iv. 24, vi. 4 ff., viii. 11).

10. **unto righteousness, unto salvation.** His belief and confession (ver. 9) are two aspects of man's new relationship towards God. So righteousness and salvation are two aspects of God's action upon the believer. Righteousness refers to his full standing before God; salvation to his full deliverance from every evil. Each of them begins here; each of them is consummated at the last day.

11. Quoting Isa. xxviii. 16. (See note on Rom. ix. 33.) The emphasis here is on the word "believeth on him." **Whosoever.** Lit., "every one who believeth." The word for "every one" is added by Paul to the quotation from Isaiah.

12. The Apostle takes up the idea in "whosoever" which he has introduced into his quotation, and marks it as characteristic of the gospel. **no difference.** R.V., "no distinction." The universal need (cf. iii. 22) is met by a universal grace. **for the same Lord over all is rich.** R.V., "for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich." The Lord here is, of course, Christ. Frequently in the N.T. this title is given to Him with a consciousness that it had before been used of Jehovah (cf. 2 Thess. i. 9; 1 Cor. ii. 16, x. 21, 26; 2 Cor. iii. 16; also Eph. iv. 5; Phil. ii. 11, etc.). **that call upon him.** In the O.T. the Jews were known as those who "called upon Jehovah." So Christians were said to "call upon Christ," or upon His name (cf. ii. 21, ix. 14, 21, xxii. 16; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 22).

13. See Joel ii. 32. The reference there is to the remnant of Judah. The Apostle applies it

universally. **the Lord.** In Joel it is, of course, Jehovah; here it is Christ.

(3) The need of proclamation (x. 14–16).

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a
15 preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of*
16 *good things!* But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, *Lord, who hath believed our report?*

There is much dispute as to the exact connection of this passage with the preceding and following verses. For a moment the Apostle's eye seems to catch a vision of the world waiting for the call of God, ready to believe when they have heard the message. The verses read like an emotional parenthesis.

14. One word in each question leads to the next. **How then shall they call.** This open confession of the Lord (ver. 10) and "call" or cry of dependence upon Him (ver. 13) presupposes faith, but faith presupposes a message delivered, and the message a preacher, and the preacher presupposes one who sends.

15. The Apostle ends this linked series of questions by quoting Isa. lii. 7. R.V. omits the words "preach the gospel of peace, and," which may have been inserted by a copyist to complete the quotation. **glad tidings of good things.** R.V. *margin* reads "a gospel of good things."

16. **But they have not all obeyed the**

gospel. R.V., "But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings (*margin*, gospel)." The Apostle, in quoting Isaiah's enthusiastic words, remembers the sad ones which follow (Isa. liii. 1), in which, according to the received interpretation, the Prophet mourns over the scant attention given to the subject of the prophetic message. The Apostle cites the words as having a parallel in the present rejection of the gospel by the Jews.

(4) The rejection by Israel (x. 17-21).

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word
18 of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily,
their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto
19 the ends of the world. But I say, Did not Israel know?
First Moses saith, *I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.*
20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, *I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that*
21 *asked not after me.* But to Israel he saith, *All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gain saying people.*

The three preceding verses have emphasized the idea of proclamation and hearing of the gospel. The Apostle now returns to his main subject more explicitly. He has described the contrast between legalism and faith. He now deals with the fact that faith has been rejected.

17. This verse catches up the phrase of ver. 8, "the word about faith which we preach," and makes its assertion a fresh starting-point for exposure of the guilt of Israel. **So then faith cometh by hearing.** R.V., "So belief cometh." **and hearing by the word of God.** R.V., "by

the word of Christ." When that message is delivered, and men hear with the heart, faith arises. The R.V. use of "belief" here is unfortunate.

18. **But I say, Have they not heard?** R.V., "Did they not hear?" We must note the vigour of the Apostle's challenge and of his answer. He cries out—"Did I mean to say that they did not hear the gospel preached?" "Yes, indeed, they have heard," is his reply. The quotation is from Ps. xix. 4 (Gr. trans.), where the words refer, of course, to nature and her universal witness to the glory of the Creator. The Apostle must not be interpreted as meaning that the words were meant originally to apply to the gospel (cf. note on Rom. i. 8). He has the right of every man with an instinct for the uses of literature to adapt the charm of that Psalm regarding nature to the new world opened up by the gospel.

19. **Did not Israel know?** R.V., "Did Israel not know?" **Israel.** All through Paul has been thinking of the Jews, though he has not named them since ix. 31 and x. 1. He meets the statement that Israel did not really understand the message of God, but he repels the idea rather by tone and implication than by explicit argument. The following quotations do not fairly face the problem, but they do bring out both the presence of a definite control in Israel's history and the fact of Israel's guilt. There is a form of ignorance for which a man is not responsible. Some ignorance, however, flows from the heart and will, and involves the consciousness of guilt. Yet cf. 1 Tim. i. 13. **First Moses.** The quotation is from Deut. xxxii. 21. Note the introduction of

the idea that the Divine mercy to other nations will arouse a spirit of "jealousy" and anger among the Jews. The people they had despised will rebuke them by the superiority of their loyalty to God. This word will recur in chap. xi. It is deliberately quoted here because the Apostle is going to make it one of the important turning-points in his argument.

20. **But Esaias is very bold.** R.V., "And Isaiah is very bold." These words were originally applied to the unfaithful in Israel. Here, the Apostle extends their sweep to the Gentiles who, all unconscious of his revelation in the past, will suddenly find themselves in its full light through the preaching of the gospel.

21. **But to Israel he saith.** R.V., "But as to Israel he saith." In contrast with what above is described as the hope of the Gentiles, the terrible words of Isa. lxv. 2 are applied to the chosen people. They describe God as standing in an attitude of great sorrow, His pleading and the offer of His love rejected (cf. Matt. xxiii. 37).

In this chapter it is evident that the Apostle has proceeded on a line absolutely inconsistent with the argument of chap. ix. Here, he lays the responsibility for their condition wholly upon the will of human beings. He treats the delivery of the message concerning Christ as a full opportunity for every man to enter into righteousness and to inherit salvation, but without mitigation lays the responsibility for neglect upon the man who makes himself deaf to that message. Here, there is no word about God hardening men's hearts, but rather of His pleading with them. Here, human nature is not described as clay in the hands

of the potter, but rather in the dignity of a power which can reject God. The Apostle neither here nor in the succeeding chapter attempts to reconcile these two positions. They are inherent in the nature of man and of God, and in their mutual relations. And a pious soul will always find that relief is to be found not in ignoring one and emphasizing only the other element in this situation, but rather in giving full meaning to each. The Pauline man is he who without any sense of contradiction knows how to cast himself wholly upon God, and yet how to take upon himself the responsibility of that very act.

Rom. xi.

3. THE SIN OF ISRAEL AND THE DIVINE GRACE.

In this chapter the Apostle restates the whole case. Having written in the beginning of the ninth chapter (vers. 1–13) as if Israel had indeed been rejected; having rested their fate upon the will of God (vers. 14–29); having then asserted with equal vigour the responsibility of Israel for the hardening which had come to them, he now reopens the original question (ver. 1) and takes issue with his own previous assumption. He asserts that God has not rejected Israel, but in pursuance of his age-long plan has reserved for himself a remnant of the race (vers. 1–10). Having taken this strong position, the Apostle then develops one of the most surprising thoughts in the whole history of theological thought, one whose far-reaching significance our minds are not yet able to grasp. The principle which he discovers both in the Scripture and in

his very conception of the grace of God is, that even the rejection of a people may become an instrument of grace. It is through the rejection of Israel that the Gentiles are now receiving the gospel (vers. 11–24). But if this is the case, then the next step, not less startling, not less thrilling, may be fearlessly taken, namely, that if the rejection is instrumental, then it must be also temporary; that, if Israel stumbles in order that the Gentiles may be admitted into the kingdom, the receiving of the Gentiles must react upon the position of those who had stumbled. They shall be also included in the universal mercy of God (vers. 25–32). It seems natural to find at the close of this sublime stretch of thought one of the most powerful outbursts of praise in the Apostle's writings. The wonder of God's wisdom has broken upon his vision and he can do naught but adore the majesty of his God (vers. 33–36).

(1) The remnant and the rejection (xi. 1–10).

1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid.
For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the
2 tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people
which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith
of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel,
3 saying, *Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down*
thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.
4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? *I have*
reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed
5 *the knee to the image of Baal.* Even so then at this
present time also there is a remnant according to the
6 election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of
works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of

works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is
7 no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained
that which he seeketh for; but the election hath ob-
8 tained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is
written, *God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes
that they should not see, and ears that they should not*
9 *hear;) unto this day.* And David saith, *Let their table be
made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a re-*
10 *compence unto them: let their eyes be darkened, that they
may not see, and bow down their back alway.*

1. **I say then.** With these words the Apostle introduces his reconstruction of the whole case. But he puts the question in a peculiar form, the meaning of which is brought out not by a literal translation, such as that of R.V. ("Did God cast off his people?"), but in this way, "God has not cast off his people, has he?" With a "God forbid" the Apostle refuses to consider that with the Lord there is any breaking of His repeated pledges (Ps. xii. 22, xciv. 14, xcv. 4). **For I also,** etc. Paul does not offer himself as a proof that God has not cast off His people, which would look like arrogance. This personal statement is closely linked with the form of the question noted above. Both question and answer are expressed in an emotional atmosphere. "I who am one of the sons of Israel cannot think that God is unfaithful." It is his consciousness as a child of the ancient covenant that forbids him to think that God has cast off His people (cf. Phil. iii. 5).

2. **God has not cast away.** R.V., "God did not cast off." **foreknew** (cf. viii. 29). Having formed His Divine purpose concerning His people, God will not be unfaithful to Himself by abandon-

ing them. **Wot ye not?** R.V., "Or wot ye not." Do you not understand the implication of the Scriptures? **of Elias.** R.V., "of Elijah." The R.V. *margin* is right to suggest "in Elijah." The O.T. Scriptures were divided into sections which were known and cited by their subjects. The Apostle means here—Do you not understand what was contained in the section concerning Elijah? The reference is to 1 Kings xix. 10, 14, where Elijah pleads in his great dejection on Mount Horeb, before Jehovah.

4. **the answer of God.** The Greek word so translated means "an oracle," especially one which conveys monition (cf. Matt. ii. 12, 22; Luke ii. 26; Acts x. 22; Heb. viii. 5, xi. 7, xii. 25). **I have reserved to myself.** R.V., "I have left for myself." The word "myself" is here added to the Greek translation by the Apostle. **who have not bowed.** These words show that this remnant to whom the Lord refers are a remnant in that they had been faithful to him.

5. Here the crucial statement is made. A similar condition exists as the Apostle writes, for once again the will of Jehovah has been manifested in Jesus as of old in Elijah; while the great mass reject him, there are those who bow before this revelation of the Divine will. This remnant, the Apostle means to say, has always been the heart of Israel's history. It is through the minority of every generation who lived in faith and obedience that the history of grace has continued. **according to the election** (cf. for this word ix. 11, xi. 7, 28; 2 Thess. i. 4; 2 Pet. i. 10).

6. **And if by grace.** R.V., "But if it is by grace." If this remnant consists of those who

deserve by their works the favour of God, then their standing before Him is not of grace but of debt (cf. iv. 4). In that case the whole hope which the existence of a remnant gives is wrecked, for who knows how long such desert will last? There is more hope if we depend upon the Divine grace and not upon human merit. **But if it be . . . no more works.** This second half of ver. 6 R.V. rightly omits.

7. This principle is proved in the fact that Israel was set upon righteousness by works and failed. And yet righteousness which the mass missed has descended upon "the election," that is the inner group, the living heart of Israel, through which the history of grace proceeds. **were blinded.** R.V., "were hardened." The Apostle does not say by whom this hardening was wrought. As in Pharaoh's case he leaves it indefinite (cf. ix. 23). What is God's act is man's, and the act of man is God's act. A man hardens his heart by unbelief; God hardens his heart in his unbelief.

8. **God hath given them a spirit of slumber.** R.V., "God gave them a spirit of stupor." This verse is made up from familiar language in Isa. xxix. 10; Deut. xxix. 4; Isa. vi. 9, 10. **unto this day.** R.V., "unto this very day." The Apostle means that what was true of Israel in the days of the prophets was true in his own. The character of the general mass had not changed (cf. Matt. v. 12, xxiii. 29–39; Acts vii. 51). With the words from Isa. vi. 10 cf. Matt. xiii. 14, 15; John xii. 40.

9, 10. This quotation is from Ps. lxix. 22, 23. The same passage is referred to Luke xxi. 34. The points involved in the citation are: (1) The people's careless self-indulgence, (2) the sudden retribution

which takes the form (3) of deserved recompense. (4) This results in spiritual incapacity and (5) in distress under the burdens of the soul. For the idea of a sudden retribution, cf. 1 Thess. v. 2 ff.; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. iii. 3, xvi. 15.

(2) The rejection as an instrument of grace (xi. 11–24).

11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now
12 if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much
13 more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:
14 if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which
15 are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?
16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if
17 the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of
18 the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root,
19 but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches
20 were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by
21 faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not
22 thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt
23 be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in
24 again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is

wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?

11. **Have they stumbled that they should fall?** R.V., "Did they stumble that they might fall?" Starting once more with a question, the Apostle asks whether Israel has only stumbled or utterly fallen to destruction. (The Greek word for stumble here has nothing to do with the word for "stumblingblock" above, ver. 9.) He flings the thought away. **but rather through their fall.** R.V., "but by their fall (*margin*, trespass)." **jealousy.** Catching up the suggestion (ix. 19) of Moses, the Apostle asserts that the false step which Israel has taken has been the historical means by which the gospel reached the Gentiles. The good fortune of the Gentiles may therefore be expected to react upon Israel, arousing them to what he calls "jealousy." What the Apostle means is exactly illustrated in Acts xi. 18, xv. 7–11 and, from his own experience, Acts xiii. 46 ff., xviii. 12 ff, xxviii. 25–28. It is unfortunate that the word "trespass" was not put in the text by R.V., as the word translated "fall," in the question, is not the same as that translated "fall" here and in ver. 12.

12. **Now if the fall of them.** R.V., "Now if their fall." **and the diminishing of them.** R.V., "and their loss." This word is one of considerable difficulty. It is best, however, to refer it to the small number of those who believed, and not to either their lost estate or their sense of loss. **riches.** In both cases this must refer to the spiritual wealth of the kingdom of God. **how**

much more their fulness? The Apostle means to ask, if a remnant, a small number of Israelites, have by their faith brought many Gentiles into the light and spread it through the world, what may we expect if all Israel should believe?

13. **For I speak to you Gentiles.** R.V., "But I speak to you that are Gentiles." Another of the indications that the church at Rome consisted mainly of Gentiles. The punctuation in R.V. differs from that of A.V., beginning a new sentence with "inasmuch" and reading "Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry." The emphasis here in the original is on the word "I." Paul speaks in the full consciousness of his appointment by the Lord Himself to bring the gospel to the Gentile world.

14. **provoke to emulation.** R.V., "to jealousy." He considers that his Gentile mission is part of that plan of God by which at last his own people are to be saved (cf. above, ver. 11). **and might save some of them.** R.V., "and may save." (Cf. for this careful statement 1 Cor. ix. 22.) The Apostle has learned how hard must be the task if all are to be saved.

15. **the casting away of them,**—that is, the rejection of Israel, because Israel rejected Jesus the Messiah. **reconciling** (cf. 2 Cor. v. 19). The act of God in Christ is realized through the work of man in His name. The latter is a real part of the plan of God, resting, however, always upon the work of God accomplished once for all in His Son. **life from the dead.** This does not mean "the resurrection at the last day" (John xi. 24), nor is it satisfactory to consider it "a description of unimaginable blessing" (Denney); rather

should we connect the phrase with the ideas which rule in vi. 1–11.

16. From "the fathers' sake" in ver. 28 we conclude that the reference in the words "first-fruit" and "root" is to the patriarchs who were the founders of Israel's religious history. (On "firstfruit" and "lump," cf. Num. xv. 19, 20.) As the offering of the firstfruits sanctified the whole mass, so the holiness of their fathers sanctified their descendants.

17. At this point the Apostle breaks off to use a very striking and instructive illustration drawn from the culture of the olive tree. **And if some.** R.V., "But if some." For "graffed in" R.V. always reads "grafted in." He likens the receiving of the Gentiles into the kingdom and to the fellowship of the patriarchs to the process by which the branch of a wild olive should be grafted into the cultivated tree. This is contrary to the custom, for it is a branch of a cultivated tree that is grafted upon the wild stock. But he uses the reverse process to emphasize the unexpected or miraculous nature of God's grace to the Gentiles. **with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree.** R.V., "didst become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree (*margin*, of the root and of the fatness)."

18. **Boast not against.** R.V., "glory not over." The Apostle is most anxious to prevent the Gentiles from assuming an attitude of superiority to the Jews. He reminds them that "salvation is of the Jews" (cf. John iv. 22). History has shown the abundant need for this humbling of the Gentile spirit towards the race from which the world's hope has sprung.

19. Paul seems to overhear the argument of incipient pride asserting that it is God that has cast the Jew away for the Gentiles' sake.

20. **Well.** The Apostle hardly stops to argue the point, hurrying to the heart of the matter, which is that unbelief caused the desolation of the Jews and faith is the standing ground of the Gentiles. But who that has a living faith boasts, or who that knows the sin of unbelief glories over it? Contrarywise, the Gentile must repel all high-mindedness and live in reverential fear, which must be a constant characteristic of true faith.

21. **take heed lest,** etc. R.V., "neither will he spare thee." If God has visited with judgment the rebellion of Israel, the Gentiles cannot hope to be treated with tolerance if they fail where Israel failed.

22. He recalls them to the double aspect of the Divine character—**goodness and severity.** The latter word only occurs here in N.T., and suggests the idea of a cutting away or "severing." **towards thee, goodness.** R.V., "toward thee, God's goodness." To continue in humble dependence on this goodness of God is the only shelter from His severity. To judge the Jew and act towards him as if the Gentile had goodness from another source is to lose it, and the only result of such loss is that terrible cutting-off.

23. **if they abide not still in unbelief.** R.V., "if they continue not in their unbelief." For the latter we may read "unless they continue in their unbelief." Paul, looking into the future, sees the might of God (**God is able**) exerted upon the broken life of Israel. He does not consider their unbelief as final, nor God's punishment upon them

as irreversible. No state of unbelief that we can measure or discuss in human terms can be considered as final.

24. We have here a further humbling of the Gentile spirit and brightening of the Jewish prospect. The emphasis is once more upon the idea that the Gentile, (R.V.) "by nature a wild olive tree, was grafted in" contrary to nature. It was by a miracle of Divine wisdom and grace that the Gentiles were saved. How much more, he exclaims, may we expect that the natural branches, these that belong to the tree and were cut off, should be by the same wisdom and grace restored to their position and their privilege.

(3) The rejection temporary, mercy final (xi. 25–32).

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the ful-
26 ness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, *There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from*
27 *Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall*
28 *take away their sins.* As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election
29 they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and
30 calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy
31 through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain
32 mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

In these verses the Apostle sums up the matter afresh, but now abandoning the process of almost

abstract reasoning he treats the matter as one of revelation. Very solemnly he introduces this part.

25. **For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery.** R.V., "have you ignorant of this mystery." This is a formal and solemn call which the Apostle uses on various occasions demanding special attention of his readers to the following statements (cf. Rom i. 13; 1 Thess. iv. 13; 1 Cor. x. 1, xii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 8). **this mystery.** This word was taken from the language of Greek religious thought. The mysteries of heathen religions were occasions or sources of revelation or illumination, and the elaborate stages by which persons passed through processes of initiation until they were fit to receive the mystery must have become familiar to the mind of the Apostle Paul in his discussions with many inquirers. Several words connected with the religious mysteries occur in his letters: *initiation,* Phil. iv. 12; *sealing,* Eph. i. 13; *perfection,* Col. i. 28; 1 Cor. ii. 6. The mystery is referred to in various connections by the Apostle: Eph. i. 9, iii. 3, 4; Col. i. 26, 27, etc. The Apostle considers, then, that the doctrine he has just been stating belongs to the very revelation of the mind of God. He does not give us any hint as to how he has received this revelation. What he is sure of is **that blindness in part is happened to Israel** (R.V., "that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel"). He recognizes that this casting away of Israel applies only to a portion of the race. He further repeats that it will last only until the Gentiles as a whole have been brought into the faith.

26. **And so all Israel shall be saved.** We can imagine the leap of his heart as the Apostle wrote those words, his mind mounting to a great confidence in the unchangeable and glorious purpose of God. He establishes and supports it in a quotation from Isa. lix. 20; the final clause from Isa. xxvii. 9. The words indicate the unchanged will of God, who will not allow His purpose to be broken but holds Himself to His covenant, even though it involves the sublime act of forgiving their unfaithfulness to Him. On **covenant,** see notes on Gal. iii. 15; also 1 Cor. xi. 25; Matt. xxvi. 28. It is one of the great facts discussed in Epistle to Hebrews.

28. **As concerning the gospel.** R.V., "As touching the gospel." A simple statement of God's attitude towards the Jews. He treats them at present as enemies so far as the gospel is concerned, but this is for the sake of the Gentiles. On the other hand, He treats them as beloved so far as that great act of election is concerned, and that in faithfulness to the fathers. He is still, as Jesus said, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob (Luke xx. 37, 38).

29. Cf. 2 Cor. vii. 10. **without repentance.** R.V. *margin*, "not repented of." A sublime statement concerning the absolute faithfulness of God. The gifts must refer to the privileges of Israel. He will not depose them finally from their place of honour. The calling refers, of course, to the Divine selection of that race, not merely for privilege, but for the service of the world, as this whole passage describes.

30, 31. **For as ye in times past have not believed** (*margin*, "obeyed") **God.** R.V., "were

disobedient to God." **through their unbelief.** R.V., "by their disobedience." Here we have a specific ground given for the assertion in ver. 29. These verses wind up the whole argument of the chapter. The past sins of the Gentiles do not prevent God's mercy from reaching them; but it did as a matter of historical fact come through the disobedience of the Jews in rejecting Christ. Now, just as mercy overtook the disobedient Gentiles so may we be sure that the revelation of the quality of mercy in their experience will react upon Israel and include them also within its embrace.

32. **For God hath concluded them all in unbelief** (*margin*, "shut them all up together"). R.V., "For God hath shut up all unto disobedience." We need not discuss what the Apostle here and elsewhere in this section means by "all." To infer that this is a dogmatic statement of universal salvation, that no individual in Israel or among the Gentiles can be finally lost; or on the other hand to infer that he is thinking only of the people living upon the earth in his own day, is to fasten logical exactness upon words which spring from the emotion rather than the reasoning of faith. He is thinking simply of Israel as a people and their present extrusion from the benefits of the gospel by their own sin. He is thinking of the Gentile world, and of the marvellous manner in which large numbers in that world welcome the gospel with open hearts. He sees the latter process spreading until the light and wonder of it overwhelm the unbelief of Israel and turn the ancient people into the path of faith once more. It is a programme of history that is before him,

history dealing with the relation of races in masses and not with the fate of individuals. This vision of the great Apostle's mind may be translated if a man will into a philosophy of history, into a detailed programme for the future. But it is best to hold it as he left it—a sublime revelation of the transcendent power of that faith in God's mercy and God's wisdom which Christ had poured into the hearts of men. Especially is it important to recognize here the Apostle's perception of the fact that no form of evil or of sin is strong enough to defeat the final purpose of His grace. Of course the Apostle is too deep a thinker to hold that evil is only an instrument of good, and sin only a stepping-stone to holiness, and unbelief only a phase of the soul's progress towards faith. For him sin remains sin, and he will not tamper with his conscience or confuse his judgment by any such thoughts as these. But he has seen God turn man's unrighteousness towards Jesus to account; he has seen the cross made the instrument of their salvation; he has seen death itself overcome, and one man's death made the open door for all men's hopes. But he can hold this position safely and with a good conscience, because he sees, as this whole epistle has proved, that on the cross God condemned sin at an infinite price to Himself. Henceforth, if men can say that God will make even unbelief an instrument of grace, it is because they have seen Him make the sacrifice of His Son the condition of the forgiveness of sins.

(4) The wonder of God's wisdom (ii. 33–36).

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments,
34 and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the
35 mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed
36 unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

The argument of the preceding three chapters so revealed the infinite wisdom and mercy of God to the Apostle's mind that he is moved to this great outburst of praise and adoration. He bows in holy and humble awe before the glory of Him whose ways he has been describing.

33. **O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!** R.V. *margin* suggests two other readings—"O the depth of the riches both of wisdom and knowledge," or, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God." The latter is to be preferred. **depth.** God is unfathomable in His wealth of grace, His wisdom, His knowledge (cf. 1 Cor. ii. 10; Eph. iii. 18). **riches.** This is a favourite word with Paul—connected five times with glory (Rom. ix. 23; Eph. i. 18, iii. 16; Phil. iv. 19; Col. i. 27), and twice with grace (Eph. i. 7, ii. 7). Col. i. 27 should be compared closely with this verse and ver. 25 above ("this mystery"). **wisdom, knowledge.** The intellectual attributes of God with which He has overcome the defects of sin surpass all our calculation and insight. **judgments, ways.** Referring in a general sense to the choice and execution of his plans. **past finding out.** R.V., "past tracing out" (Eph. iii. 8).

34. Quoting Isa. xl. 13 (cf. i. Cor. ii. 10).

35. Quoting Job. xli. 11 from the Hebrew and not as usually the Greek translation. No man can make God a debtor. All the blessing that proceeds from the eternal grace is a pure gift of mercy.

36. The ingenious theologian has tried to read these three phrases as referring to the Trinity. No such idea was in the Apostle's mind. All things are of God as their source; through God as their creator; unto God, because they subserve His purpose. **all things.** Some question whether this means the universe or "all the things which have just been in contemplation" (cf. 2 Cor. v. 18). The former is preferable, for 1 Cor. iii. 22, and even Rom. viii. 38, 39, show that Paul can think of the universe in all its elements and parts as the instrument of the Divine will.

PART IV. THE JUSTIFIED MAN IN ACTION.

(Rom. xii. 1–xv. 13.)

In every Pauline epistle the author passes from what is usually called doctrine to ethics (cf. Eph. iv. 1; Gal. v. 1; Col. iii. 1). But it is not accurate to describe these two divisions as theoretical and practical respectively. The Apostle did not consider himself to be theorizing in the first part of any of his epistles. He was describing actual relations between God and man. For him they are as practical as any other phase of human action and experience. He is concerned in the first part

with the description of the relations between man and God, which the gospel has revealed as so varied, so rich, so full of meaning and power. In them man's experience is, and ought to be, as vivid and concrete, and therefore as practical, as in any other phase of his life. When he passes to what we have weakly come to call the practical portion of his letter, he is simply showing how the new relations with God renew our relations with men; how the inner experience which the gospel has created works on our volitional experience in social life. There is a division indeed, and a natural one, between these two phases of our life, but they are both practical, and the Apostle was probably unconscious of theorizing in the one field any more than in the other. We shall have a better form of Christian Ethics when this is realized, and not less certainly a more concrete and practical form of stating Christian Doctrine on its inner or purely religious side.

This part of the epistle is divisible into seven sections. (1) The new attitude of man towards God is briefly resumed (xii. 1, 2). (2) In the new community which this experience has created, certain fundamental principles of conduct are stated (xii. 3–8). (3) This passes naturally into a description of the renewed spirit and conduct of the justified man, both towards his brethren in the Church and towards all men (xii. 9–21). (4) A specific problem not elsewhere dealt with by the Apostle naturally emerges as he writes to the Church in Rome, namely, that concerning the attitude of Christians towards the secular government of the day (xiii. 1–7). (5) A brief paragraph ensues on the law of love (xiii. 8–10). (6) And

this is followed by an exhortation founded upon the urgency of the hour, for the day of Christ is near (xiii. 11–14). (7) One phase of the relations of Jew and Gentile, and even of Christian and non-Christian, which pressed upon the Apostle's attention in other cities may have assumed a peculiar intensity at this time in the church at Rome, for he enters upon a lengthy discussion of what we may call the duty of the "strong" (xiv. 1–xv. 13).

Rom. xii. 1, 2.

1. THE RENEWED WILL TOWARDS GOD.

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,
that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, accept-
2 able unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be
not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the
renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that
good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

Most expositors connect this paragraph with the last words of chap. xi. If, however, we are right in assuming that at the close of that chapter the Apostle ceased dictation and, either by means of a re-reading or without it, meditated a while over the whole course of his argument, then these carefully constructed sentences must be taken as referring rather to the new situation in which the Christian man finds himself, and which has been described in chaps. iii. 21–viii. 39.

1. **I beseech you therefore.** The new relations with God in Christ are not the experience of a passive, but an active, will. It is the renewed will which is here addressed, and which every man

must exert strongly if the fruits of justification are to be borne in social action. **by the mercies of God** (cf. Luke vi. 36; 2 Cor. i. 3). These mercies are in Christ as they flow from the heart of Divine love and reach the undeserving heart of the sinful man. **that ye present your bodies.** R.V., "to present your bodies." This must mean your whole selves, the body being named simply as the basis and weapon of the spiritual life (cf. vi. 13–19). The verb is frequently used of the formal presentation of persons and offerings before God. Here this is called **sacrifice**—one of the rare instances in which the Apostle uses the language of the Temple metaphorically for the spiritual relations established in the gospel. **living.** For this sacrifice is not of a dead animal, but of a quickened and conscious spirit. **holy.** For acceptance in Christ has set apart the individual for God. **acceptable to God.** R.V. *margin*, "well-pleasing." For He has infinite delight in the movement of the renewed will. **reasonable service.** The word "service" means formal worship, and the whole phrase means "a ceremonial of thought and mind" (B. Jowett). Paul rarely employs the language of sacrifice and ritual in relation to the Christian, and never so as to establish sacramentarian doctrine (cf. Phil. ii. 17, iv. 18; Rom. xv. 16).

2. **And be not conformed to this world.** R.V., "fashioned according to this world (*margin*, age)." The will which the Divine Spirit now animates must seek, in its own action, to break away from the customs imposed upon it by the surrounding life of society, must seek to realize that **renewing** of the **mind** which is the work of God's Spirit indeed, but which a man must ener-

getically put into operation. The need for this renewal is described in chap. vii. (cf. Eph. iv. 23; Tit. iii. 5). For the distinction between "fashioned" and "transformed," see note in Lightfoot's *Commentary on Phil.* ii. 6–8. "Fashion" is more external and less essential than "form." **prove,**—that is, discriminate or discover (cf. Gal. vi. 4; 1 Thess. ii. 4; Rom. i. 28, ii. 18; Phil. i. 10; 1 Cor. xi. 28; Eph. v. 10). **what is that good.** etc. R.V. *margin* is preferable—"what is the will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect." For acceptable we must read "well-pleasing." **perfect.** Frequently used by Paul of persons (1 Cor. ii. 6; Eph. iv. 13; Phil. iii. 15; Col. i. 28, iv. 12; cf. Matt. v. 48, xix. 21).

Rom. xii. 3-8.

2. CONDUCT IN THE CHURCH.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man
that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than
he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God
4 hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we
have many members in one body, and all members have
5 not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in
6 Christ, and every one members one of another. Having
then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to
us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the
7 proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our minis-
8 tering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that
exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with
simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth
mercy, with cheerfulness.

The Christian man has received the gospel directly or indirectly from a community, and finds

that it can only be realized by him in a communal life. In that community certain principles obtain and certain functions must be exercised. The Apostle here deals first with the principle of humility (ver. 3) and then with the conditions of service which are imposed upon every true member of the body (vers. 4–8).

3. **For I say.** The change wrought according to vers. 1, 2 in the mind of the Christian man issues in humility (cf. Phil. ii. 3, 4). It is a permanent experience of the Christian Church that one of the first dangers of the new life is self-exaltation. The very intensity with which selfhood is emphasized in the experience of repentance, faith, forgiveness, and the receiving of the Spirit, the very importance attached to the individual by the earnestness of his teachers in winning him to the gospel, tend to intensify the natural proclivity of the human heart towards self-esteem. **through the grace.** The Apostle is careful to disown any accusation of self-exaltation in this very act of exhorting others to humility. True humility may exercise even the greatest office and be conscious of its greatness, and yet do so with utter unselfishness. So with Jesus and His supreme office of Messiah, Saviour, and King. **not to think of himself more highly.** Self-consciousness is a law of life, and hence a man "ought to think of himself," and even to think highly of himself, in his Christian estate. The Apostle is not by any means insisting upon a mean meekness or a foolish self-effacement. A man must not think less adequately of himself any more than he must think more highly of himself. To think spiritually he must have a habit of thought which issues in the stern control of all

selfish and self-exalting impulses. **according as God,** etc. The rule of safety here is to recognize what God has given to each man, and to use it not as a private possession but as a gift through faith, and even to realize that the very faith which a man has springs from the grace of God, and not from his own merit or power.

4, 5. The mutual dependence of members in a Christian community is illustrated by that of the various parts of the body, a favourite figure with the Apostle (cf. 1 Cor. xii. 12–31; Eph. iv. 15; Col. i. 18). The varying offices of the members of the body are emphasized here, vers. 6–8, but before speaking of the variety Paul asserts their unity in Christ. **every one members one of another.** R.V., "severally members one of another." A peculiar phrase, referring of course to the interdependence of the various parts of an organism by which they co-operate for the life of the whole.

6, 7, 8. There is difficulty about the grammatical construction of these verses, but the A.V. and R.V. have, by inserting active verbs in italics, brought out the meaning with sufficient clearness. Some of the forms of action named here can hardly be carried on in a community except through special men, gifted and appointed for them; but others are actions demanded of each towards all. **gifts.** Or, we may say, "charisms." The word is used by Paul alone (except 1 Pet. iv. 10) and is closely connected with the word for grace. He uses it of various privileges and powers with which the Christian is endued by the Spirit of God (cf. Rom. i. 11, vi. 23, xi. 29; 1 Cor. xii. 4 ff.; 2 Tim. i. 6). Here the word is applied to moral and spiritual endowments for the varied forms of service within

the Church. **differing according to the grace that is given to us.** R.V., "was given to us." Humility must always remember that every endowment, privilege, or opportunity is a gift from that grace which called men into the Church at baptism (cf. Eph. iv. 11 ff.). **prophecy.** Does not mean necessarily the power of foretelling the future, but that of revealing spiritual truth. For long there existed in the early Church a class of men as prophets, the history of whose office, however, is obscure. **according to the proportion of faith.** Lit., "the analogy of faith." This phrase has been employed in later theology for the statement of a doctrine in the light of a standard, such as the Scriptures or the creed of the Church; but no such meaning belongs to it here. The Apostle simply refers to the idea expressed in ver. 3 regarding the apportionment of faith to each by God Himself.

7. **ministry.** This probably refers to duties involved in handling the pecuniary affairs of the Church, and especially its gifts to the poor. Our word "deacon" is derived from the Greek word used here (cf. Acts vi. 1 ff.). **he that teacheth.** Regular instruction belonged to the life of a Church from the very beginning. Jesus, its Founder, was first known as a teacher, and the intellectual element in the gospel permanently requires both the training and the persistent labour of those who are "apt to teach."

8. **exhorteth.** This word might better be translated "comforteth," or "giveth encouragement." No function is more necessary in the early history of Christianity amid a hostile environment than that of the courageous and brave man who is able to strengthen the faith and quicken

the ardour of the more timid and the more easily distressed. Barnabas is said to have been a man distinguished for this power (Acts iv. 36). **he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity** (*margin*, "liberally"; R.V., "with liberality"; *margin*, "singleness"). The A.V. gives the best meaning. The rich who were able to give were tempted to do so with mixed motives, with pride and condescension or with a view to the exercise of power. It is a distinct grace of God when gifts are made out of perfectly pure motives with simplicity of aim. **with diligence.** Rather, "with moral earnestness." This is to be the distinguishing characteristic of him who rules or directs the affairs of the community in any way (cf. 1 Thess. v. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5, v. 17). **sheweth mercy.** The establishment of the Church opened the sealed fountains of human pity. All manner of suffering, distress, poverty, disease, drew out the helpful sympathy of the renewed heart which had itself drunk deep of the mercy of God. There is no more beautiful characteristic of mercifulness than its cheerfulness or gladness. When such work is done grudgingly its very quality is destroyed.

Rom. xii. 9–21.

3. CONDUCT TOWARDS ALL MEN.

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is
10 evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned
one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring
11 one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit;
12 serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribula-
13 tion; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the

14 necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them
15 which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with
16 them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise
17 in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil.
18 Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all
19 men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, *Vengeance is*
20 *mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.* Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for
21 in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

The Apostle here utters a number of brief, pointed moral exhortations which throw a flood of light upon obscure corners of motive and action in the mutual relations of men. That he has in view the intercourse of Christians with one another is obvious; but it is quite clear that these moral principles, if they operate at all, must operate universally, and some of the phrases break beyond the bounds of the Church and become universal even in their expression.

9. **without dissimulation.** R.V., "hypocrisy." Cf. 2 Cor. vi. 6; 1 Tim. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 5; 1 Pet. i. 22. **abhor . . . cleave.** Lit., "abhorring . . . cleaving." It is better to read these words as participles explaining love in its purity and sincerity. Love finds evil repulsive and good attractive.

10. **Be kindly . . . brotherly love.** R.V., "In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another." The early Christians recognized a kind of family affection, natural and spontaneous,

which sprang up in their hearts towards one another. To this they are continually exhorted that it may be as powerful as its source is Divine. **in honour preferring one another** (cf. Phil. ii. 3). This refers to the danger of conceit and rivalry, which from the first was felt in the Christian communities. The principle of honour is given a still wider application in 1 Pet. ii. 17.

11. **not slothful in business.** R.V., "in diligence not slothful." The word translated "business" or "diligence" is variously used both as verb and as noun: for speedy action, 2 Tim. iv. 9, 21, Mark vi. 25; intense determination, Gal. ii. 10, 2 Cor. vii. 11, Eph. iv. 3, 2 Pet. i. 10; concern for persons, 2 Cor. vii. 12, viii. 16. It is also used generally for moral earnestness in opposition to slackness of will, 2 Cor. viii. 7, 8. On "slothful" cf. Matt. xxv. 26. **fervent in spirit** (cf. Acts xviii. 25). An intense, boiling enthusiasm rising out of the inmost life where the Spirit of God rules the spirit of man. **serving the Lord.** R.V. *margin*, "the opportunity." A slight difference in spelling between two Greek words gives this difference of meaning.

12. **rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation** (cf. v. 2 ff., viii. 25; 1 Cor. xiii. 7. **instant.** R.V., "stedfastly" (cf. Acts i. 14, vi. 4; Col. iv. 2). The word is employed below in xiii. 6 for continual attention to duty. It implies that prayer must be pursued with unwearied energy if it is to have power.

13. **distributing to the necessity of saints.** R.V., "communicating to the necessity of the saints" (cf. Gal. vi. 6). Gifts are here regarded as acts of communion in the grace of God. The

Apostle has been much employed at the time of writing this letter with the enormous task of raising money throughout the Churches which he had founded for the relief of the poor at Jerusalem, among whom some unexplained calamity seems to have created an acute distress. **given to hospitality.** R.V. *margin*, "pursuing." This is one form of ministering to the needs of the saints (cf. Heb. xiii. 2; 2 Cor. iii. 1). Hospitality does not refer here to indiscriminate opening of Christian homes to every one, but specifically to fellow-Christians who were travelling, as many of them constantly did, and who required the shelter of friendly homes. The virtue thus emphasized helped to bind the churches of various cities and countries together in living intercourse.

14. **Bless . . . and curse not** (cf. Matt. v. 44). The word translated "pursuing" in the preceding sentence may have suggested the idea of persecuting, which is referred to here. The supreme instance of obedience to this law is, of course, Jesus Himself (1 Pet. ii. 23).

15. **rejoice, weep.** It has often been pointed out that sympathy flows more easily towards the sorrowful than towards the rejoicing. A secret envy may easily stifle the latter, while a sense of security may help to stimulate the former. In each case there is required the force of a love which enters deeply into the meaning both of the joy and the sorrow which it sees, and takes them both upon itself.

16. **the same mind** (cf. Phil. ii. 2, iv. 2; 2 Cor. xiii. 11). Some would connect the next negative commands with this one, but that seems unnecessary, even although the first of them does

emphasize a danger which easily creates division of feeling in any community. **Mind not high things.** R.V., "Set not your mind on high things." **condescend to men of low estate.** R.V., "condescend to (*margin*, be carried away with) things that are lowly." It is better to use the neuter in both places, the Apostle simply urging that men do not set before themselves ambitions that are selfish when they cannot enter into the duties that are obscure and humble (cf. Rom. xi. 20; 1 Tim. vi. 17; 1 Cor. xiii. 5). **Be not wise,** etc. (Prov. iii. 17; cf. Rom. xi. 25).

17. **Recompense.** R.V., "Render" (Matt. v. 38–48; 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 6). **provide things honest.** R.V., "Take thought for things honourable" (Prov. iii. 4, Gr. trans.; cf. 2 Cor. viii. 21). The Apostle would have Christian men careful of the conventions around them, where these are not contrary to the Christian law. Many zealous converts in non-Christian lands are apt to consider themselves free to break up the ordinary customs of home and society, and thus bring upon themselves and their religion the condemnation of barbarity. The Apostle would have his converts observe the laws of social intercourse scrupulously.

18. **live peaceably.** R.V., "be at peace" (cf. Mark ix. 50; 1 Thess. v. 13; 2 Cor. xiii. 11). The clause "if it be possible" would indicate recognition of the fact that peace has two sides, and that a man may be involved in relations of distress with another for which he has no responsibility; but he lays it upon the Christian man to maintain peace "as much as in you lieth," that is, with all his strength.

19. **Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves.**

R.V., "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto wrath (*margin*, the wrath of God)" (cf. Luke xviii. 2–8). The word "give place" has been interpreted by some to mean, Yield before your enemy's wrath. And by others, Arrest your own wrath, give it place, or rather, time to cool. But the actual meaning becomes clear when we realize that the reference is to the wrath of God. We must not assume His prerogatives. **for it is written.** The Apostle here does not directly quote but refers to Deut. xxxii. 35 (cf. Heb. x. 30). The control of men is in the hands of God, and a Christian man is one who with his whole soul recognizes that fact both in relation to himself and to his fellow-men. He must not, therefore, usurp the place of God, and inflict punishment even upon the man who has admittedly done him wrong. This is no doubt a hard task, but the Apostle is only echoing the well-known words of Jesus, Matt. v. 38 ff., 44. The endurance of wrong without revenge is only possible to two classes of men—those of weak will who, therefore, deserve the contempt of their fellows, and those of a splendid religious faith, and these are in fellowship with the mighty and redemptive resignation of Jesus. Men stand in awe of him who refuses revenge because he has faith in God (1 Pet. ii. 23).

20. **Therefore.** R.V., "But" (cf. Prov. xxv. 2, Gr. trans.). **coals of fire.** The Apostle does not mean here that the enemy suffers, as God will punish him more severely when He sees our mercy, which would be a hideous mutilation of the word of Jesus. He means that the kindness shown to a wrong-doer will tend to awaken in him a sense of shame and kindle the fire of repentance.

21. To return evil for evil is to suffer twice: first, the evil you receive; second, the evil you inflict. The only way to conquer evil is to persist in the good.

Rom. xiii. 1–7.

4. CONDUCT TOWARDS THE SECULAR GOVERNMENT.

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For
there is no power but of God: the powers that be are
2 ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the
power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that
3 resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers
are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou
then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and
4 thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister
of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is
evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for
he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath
5 upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be
subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake.
6 For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's
ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.
7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute
is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear;
honour to whom honour.

There is no other passage just like this in Paul's writings. We find passing references to rulers in 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; Tit. iii. 1. On the whole the Apostle had found the Government of the Roman Empire, of which he was a citizen by birth, to be a protector against lawless attacks. In all his travels he had seen it as the restrainer of crime, as the disseminator of order among barbarian peoples, as the guardian of commerce on the great

trade ways, as wielding the weapons of justice between the various classes and races over whom it held sway. As yet the Christian movement had not attracted the attention of the Emperor, and hence there was no official persecution. Nero was on the throne, but had not yet begun his career of madness. The Apostle's Jewish training and his familiarity with O.T. teaching must have led him to see and believe, as he teaches here, that it is by God's act that kings rule and princes decree justice. The whole story of the O.T. is the story of Jehovah's relation with the national life of its rulers, and in its pages the Apostle would find many references to His control over, and direction of, the history of other peoples and their rulers. When we have allowed for these conditions under which his mind worked, we must still admire the penetration with which in this passage he goes straight to the fundamental fact. In modern language we may say that Paul sees social order to be established by God. The principle of government is a Divine principle, and Christian men who serve God must act in their relations to the State upon that principle. It has been surmised that the Apostle had heard of dangerous tendencies among the Jews at Rome who were notorious for their uncompromising attitude towards non-Jewish governments, many of them considering it sin to acknowledge the authority of any king or to pay custom to any ruler. In this paragraph the following principles are laid down: (1) Civil order is ordained by God (vers. 1, 4, 6); (2) its purpose is the encouragement of the good and the restraint of evil-doers (vers. 2–4); (3) loyalty to the

authorities as dispensers of justice is a religious duty binding upon the Christian conscience (vers. 1, 2, 5, 6); (4) this loyalty is expressed in particular duties (vers. 6, 7).

Manifestly, the Apostle is not dealing with situations where the Government itself has become unjust, oppressive, and corrupt. Such crises must be dealt with by Christians in a Christian manner, whose exact form is not prescribed in this passage. There is, of course, no ground here for any argument on behalf of the union of Church and State, for the usurpation by either of the functions of the other. It would seem from ver. 7 that the Apostle knew the great word of Jesus, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's," and it is upon the fundamental difference between the Church as the fellowship of grace and the State as the instrument of justice that his argument proceeds.

1. **every soul.** A Hebrew expression for individual persons (Gen. xlvi. 15–18; Ex. xii. 4). **be subject unto.** R.V., "be in subjection to." **higher powers.** The word here may be translated "authorities" (Luke xii. 11; Tit. iii. 1; cf. Eph. vi. 12; Col. i. 16). **of God.** Both negatively and positively in the succeeding clauses the Apostle states that it is by an act of God that the ruling powers are established. There is almost a play on words which we may reproduce somewhat as follows: "They are ordained by God for order's sake, and every one must subordinate himself under them."

2. **resisteth the ordinance.** R.V., "withstanding." **they that resist.** R.V., "withstand." **damnation.** R.V., "judgment." Since God has

established the ruling powers, the man who withstands them must expect to be dealt with by God Himself. There is, of course, no reference here to future punishment.

3. **rulers.** He is speaking in general terms, not of individuals but of officials, and he considers the meaning and purpose of their office in itself apart from the virtues of individual men in office. **good works.** R.V., "work." **Wilt thou then not be afraid?** R.V., "And wouldest thou have no fear." The teaching is clear and obvious. God has appointed rulers that they may awaken the fear of evil-doers, and that they may give approval to those who do good.

4. **for he is the minister of God.** R.V., "he (*margin,* it) is a minister of God." The word for minister is the same as that rendered deacon elsewhere. He repeats the statement later in this same verse in connection with the infliction of judicial penalties. So directly does he connect the principle of government with God's order of life that he does not shrink from telling these Roman Christians that they must consider the judge or the emperor as the immediate servant of God. **a revenger to execute wrath,** etc. R.V., "an avenger for wrath to him," etc. The reference here is not to the wrath of the ruler but of God Himself. The punishment of crime by the State is an instrument of God and a manifestation of His indignation with evil.

5. **not only for wrath.** R.V., "not only because of the wrath." He urges that men must observe the laws, must submit themselves to their rulers, not only from their fear of this Divine wrath, **but also for conscience' sake.** Conscience here

must mean something like what it does in Rom. ii. 15, where the inner life is spoken of not merely as a private and individual, but as a social, fact. The appeal here is to that moral common sense out of which the order of society has grown, and which makes the duty of obedience obvious to the ordinary citizen.

6. **pay ye.** R.V., "ye pay" (cf. Luke xx. 20–25; Mark xii. 13–17). Here he appeals to one phase of this conscience or moral common sense, for citizens do actually pay tribute. **God's ministers.** R.V., "ministers of God's service." A new word occurs here, translated "ministers," drawn from the temple service. The Apostle uses it to emphasize the official and sacred character of the work of rulers. The phrase "upon this very thing" ought to follow the words "God's ministers." They are God's ministers for this very purpose, namely, the establishment of order, which must include levying of tribute. **attending continually** (see above, xii. 12).

7. The issue of all is stated in four exhortations based upon the principle that all who occupy definitely established offices must receive that which is due to them from Christian citizens. These **dues** include tribute, generally used of exactions from conquered people; **custom,** generally the taxes levied for the expenses of the government, as well as moral and inward duties of a reverential fear and honour.

Rom. xiii. 8–10.

5. THE LAW OF LOVE.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he
9 that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt
10 love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

As the Apostle passed over from describing the duties of Church members to one another (xii. 3 ff.) to a series of definite ethical principles (xii. 9 ff.), so here, having described the fundamental principle of relationship to the State (xiii. 1–7), he now states in brief the ethical principle which summarizes universal morality; this is the great principle of love. (On the N.T. words for love, see Sanday and Headlam, *Epistle to Romans*, pp. 374–377.)

8. **Owe no man any thing.** Possibly the use of the Greek word for dues (ver. 7) suggested the form of statement here. The Apostle means not that indebtedness is a sin, but that no debt should go unpaid. **but to love one another.** This is a universal duty, and perpetual. It never is, but always to be, paid. It is a great and significant fact that love is not treated in N.T. simply as a matter of impulse or emotion, but as a matter of will. It is commanded. And not to love is to sin against the fundamental law of a personal being. **loveth another.** R.V., "his neighbour (*margin*, the other)." The Apostle proceeds to prove this, and returns to the statement in another form in

ver. 10. It is another point of connection between these chapters and the teachings of Jesus, for it is hard to think that he did not have in mind the famous incident described in Matt. xxii. 34–40; Mark xii. 28–34; Luke x. 25–37. The law of neighbourly love is taken from Lev. i. 18 (cf. Gal. v. 14; Jas. ii. 8). **the law.** R.V. *margin*, "law." The Apostle is thinking of the Mosaic law, for he quotes part of it in the next verse, but his form of statement, and the phrase (ver. 9) **if there be any other commandment,** shows that he is thinking of law in general, such as the conscience of man everywhere imposes upon him.

9. The citation of part of the ten commandments (Ex. xx. 3–7; Deut. v. 7–21) is similar to that in Luke xviii. 20. In the N.T. passages the first two commandments named are set in reverse order from that in O.T. (cf. Jas. ii. 11). R.V. omits the commandment concerning false witness. **briefly comprehended in this saying.** R.V., "summed up in this word" (Eph. i. 10). The English word "summarize" is perhaps the nearest equivalent to the Greek, which literally means "headed up."

10. **Love worketh no ill,** etc. The Apostle takes the negative form, because that is the form of the commandment cited, which involves an injury done to other persons. Where love reigns these wrongs will be abolished (cf. 1 Cor. xiii. 4–7). Hence it is that he adds, returning to ver. 8, that love is the fulfilling of the law (R.V., "the fulfilment of the law"). This does not mean, as some have foolishly and even passionately concluded, that there is a principle of love which takes the place of the fulfilment of the laws of righteous-

ness. It does mean, however, that the man in whom this principle is at work will be found fulfilling all the commandments under its power and guidance. It is at once an organ for the discovery of the evil that must be hated (xii. 9), and the force by which the goodness is practised.

Rom. xiii. 11–14.

6. THE URGENCY OF THE HOUR.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to
awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than
12 when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at
hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and
13 let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly,
as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in
chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying:
14 but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

There is no doubt that the early Church, under the guidance of the apostles who interpreted the teachings of Jesus to the churches which they founded, believed that the day of Christ's return was not far off. His approaching manifestation was eagerly waited for, and that threw an intense light upon the problems of the hour in which they lived. How soon this intense expectation (cf. Phil. iii. 20) began to be modified in the general mind of the Church we cannot say. We certainly find signs in the writings of Paul himself that he gradually considered it possible that his own life should end before the coming of Christ. The long history of the centuries has taught us to think of the matter in another way, as impossible for the

early disciples as their way is for us; and each way is a means by which duty is interpreted, faith is stimulated, hope is made glorious. For each individual it is, of course, obvious to say that the hour of his own death and his appearing at the judgment-seat of Christ is a matter concerning which there can be no illusion; it is hurrying upon each with all the speed of time, and the deep moral exhortations and warnings of passages like this have not lost their force.

11. **And that.** R.V., "And this." The Apostle refers to the whole scope of his preceding exhortations, but especially as they are summed up in the fundamental principle of love. **knowing the time.** R.V., "the season" (2 Thess. ii. 6). The word translated "time" or "season" is sometimes translated "opportunity" (as in R.V. *margin* of Eph. v. 16; Col. iv. 5). The word refers to the whole circumstances in which Christians were put by the coming of Christ and His gospel. They felt that time had taken on a new form, that they lived under new conditions, new opportunities. **now it is high time to awake.** R.V., "high time for you to awake." The hearts of men unaware of the approach of Christ were as men in deep sleep, unaware of the approach of dawn and the urgent need for action. **for now is our salvation nearer.** R.V., "now is salvation nearer to us (*margin*, as A.V.)" (cf. on i. 16, v. 2, 10). **when we believed.** R.V., "first believed," that is at their conversion (1 Cor. iii. 5, xv. 2, 11; Gal. ii. 16).

12. This very beautiful verse derives its exquisite feeling from the pictured contrast between night and day, darkness and light, the feeling of awe and urgency, and the fact that the dawn is

approaching. The figure is carried on in the words for casting off and putting on, as of men springing from slumber, their eyes alight with the rising sun, and in the contrast between the works of darkness, which are being put off, and the armour of light which radiant warriors assume for the great day's fight. **armour** (cf. vi. 13; Eph. vi. 10–17; 1 Thess. v. 8). **light** (cf. Eph. v. 7–14; Luke xvi. 8; John xii. 35, 36).

13. **honestly.** The best word is in the A.V. *margin*, "decently," *i.e.* having regard to the proprieties which regulate social life, so that even evil men shall not flaunt their shame in the light of day (cf. 1 Thess. iv. 12; 1 Cor. xiv. 40). For the sins named here, cf. Gal. v. 20, 21.

14. **put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.** Here is the true armour of light which can be put on even before the dawn. There is a putting on of Christ at the very beginning of the Christian life (Gal. iii. 27; Rom. vi. 3), but no such act is final. It is an act which passes into a process; a relationship which must become a constant fact; a movement of the will which must become a habit of the life. Hence we find the Apostle speaking of putting on the new man (Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10). It was in reading this great verse that St. Augustine suddenly heard a voice which gave him release from his life of sensual darkness. "No further would I read," he says, "nor need I; for instantly at the end of this sentence, by a light as it were of serenity infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt vanished away." **provision for the flesh.** Men must not concentrate attention on the flesh and its interests. The result of that can only be that they must act according to its promptings

and passions. In Acts xxiv. 2, the word is translated "providence." It stands for a thoughtful care, a concentration of the mind upon the field of action.

Rom. xiv. 1–xv. 13.

7. THE DUTY OF THE STRONG.

The Apostle suddenly turns to an entirely new topic and discusses it at considerable length. It is most unlikely that he wrote this passage in ignorance of special conditions at Rome. The discussion is too pointed and too definite for that. He must have heard from some of his Roman friends that difficulties had arisen in that church on the matter which is here dealt with. It is really a brief essay on the principle of toleration within the Christian Church; a discussion of the manner in which men must treat one another "who mind not the same thing" (xii. 16; xv. 5). When division of opinion arises regarding certain matters of conduct in which one portion of the Church believes that its conscience is involved, how should the others, whose conscience is not troubled in the same regard, act towards them? Many a Christian community has been split into fragments by disputes similar to this. At Rome it would seem that some persons abstained from the eating of meat, and at the same time observed certain days as though they had statutory sanctity. Whether these were Jews or not it is impossible finally to decide. The question is presented at a different angle from that discussed in 1 Cor. viii., where the difficulty was created in relation to meats offered to idols, the eating of which might

involve Christian men in the accusation of having worshipped the idol to whom the food had been presented. There is no reference to idols in this chapter. It would seem to have been an early phase of ascetic Christianity, perhaps springing from the Essene sect of the Jews. The Apostle in his discussion pierces to the heart of the matter when he first forbids one party to judge the other (vers. 1–12), and then lays an unexpectedly strong emphasis upon the duty of those who count themselves free from this weakness of faith to deny themselves for the sake of their brethren (vers. 13–23). Then he closes his argument with an appeal to the example of Christ and an exhortation to great energy in the preserving of unity amongst themselves, that the praise of God may prevail amongst them above all the differences of judgment which obtain in their midst (xv. 1–13).

(*a*) The presumptuous judgment (xiv. 1–12).

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubt-
2 ful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all
3 things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not
him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not
him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath
4 received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's
servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he
shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.
5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another
esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully per-
6 suaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, re-
gardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the
day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth,
eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that

eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God
7 thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man
8 dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the
Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord:
whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.
9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived,
10 that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. But
why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at
nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judg-
11 ment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live, saith the*
Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall
12 *confess to God.* So then every one of us shall give account
of himself to God.

It is not easy to subdivide these verses into sections, for the same ideas occur throughout, but there is certainly a movement towards a climax in that he begins with the fact that in a Christian circle two sets of men were judging each other, the one with contempt for the weak in faith, and the other (the reference is not made to them in the same direct fashion) with censorious attitude towards the freedom of the "strong." In the central part of the paragraph the Apostle concentrates his statement upon the fact that there is a living cord of connection between each man's life and Christ, and that each man is immediately and supremely responsible to Him alike in his weakness or in his strength. A climax is reached when in the latter part of the paragraph it is shown to be presumption on the part of any human being who judges his brother, as all alike must speedily stand before the supreme judgment-bar of God Himself.

1. **Him that is.** R.V., "But him that is." It may be that Paul's mind passes from the thought of those who might live for the flesh (vers. 13, 14)

to those who might, in anxiety to be free of its passions, practise asceticism and live according to rule. **weak.** The word is used in this sense of a conscience given to scrupulosity only by the Apostle Paul here and in 1 Cor. viii. **in the faith.** R.V. "in faith." Faith is a form of energy alike in its enlightenment as to the truth and in its emotional content, and some men have more of this energy in both respects than others. The man who is weak here is one who does not fully comprehend the freedom which he has in Christ, or he has not yet accepted the full light which Christ gives through faith upon the moral tasks of life. **receive ye.** That is, "take them into your full fellowship." **doubtful disputations.** R.V. *margin*, "for decisions of doubts." Do not make intercourse with him an occasion for discussing and condemning the inward argumentations through which his conscience has become confused. Do not be resolved that you shall both judge and enlighten him.

2. **For one believeth that he may.** R.V., "One man hath faith to." **another who is weak.** R.V., "but he that is weak." Faith here means that confidence, that clearness of conscience, with which the Christian man acts as knowing the will of Christ. **herbs.** The class of men whom Paul calls "weak" imagined that they were forbidden to eat meats and practised vegetarianism on religious grounds. (No argument can be drawn from this, of course, against those who defend vegetarianism on physiological or other practical grounds.) The misery is that men should interpret the will of Christ as issuing limitations in such matters.

3. **despise.** R.V., "set at nought." **judge.** The two classes of men tend to look at each other with opposite tempers. A strong man who feels free to eat what is set before him is apt to despise the weakness of the other. The latter, who abstains from meats on religious grounds, is apt to be censorious and to condemn as irreligious those who disagree with him. **for God hath received him.** Both parties are reminded that God received the other into His fellowship when they received him into the Church. This is the fundamental fact concerning each man which must not be lost sight of by either, and which is implied in the whole further discussion of the subject. God counts each of these men as His child and a member "of the household of faith."

4. **Who art thou?** Better, "Thou, who art thou?" The Apostle immediately takes a very stern tone, for each of these men has constituted himself a judge. **servant.** R.V. *margin*, "household servant." Perhaps this most unusual word is intended to suggest that there is impertinence on his part who interferes with the functions of that household of which the Lord alone is the head. To that Lord each man standeth or falleth (cf. 1 Cor. x. 12; Rev. vi. 17). **he shall be holden up.** R.V., "made to stand." That is, in the day of Christ's judgment. **for God is able.** R.V., "for the Lord hath power." The Apostle is not thinking of the strong here, concerning whom there is no doubt that he stands, but concerning the weak whose faith is unclear and whom the strong man conceives to be in danger of lapsing from the faith. It is an act of faith which the strong himself must exert when he remembers that

the weak brother is in the hands of the same God, without whom he himself might fall.

5. The Apostle now passes to the central part of his argument (vers. 5–9), in which he sets out in memorable phrases the great principle of individual responsibility and individual freedom. **One man esteemeth one day,** etc. He turns from the problem of food to the question of holy days (cf. Gal. iv. 10; Col. ii. 16). It is idle to ask exactly what happened in the cases of which he writes, whether on these holy days the ascetic feasted or the non-ascetic fasted. To whatever individuals this may be addressed it is evident that they assigned a definite statutory value to the sanctity of certain days. On this matter the Apostle says, **Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.** R.V., "Let each man be fully assured." These are among the great words of the N.T. which mark the dawn of freedom and the birth of true individualism. Within each man's mind a life so rich and real is being lived that he must find there the grounds of conviction upon which his outward life is to be ordered; and here all men are alike, the trained philosopher and the humblest slave. The principle of his conduct is not to be imposed upon him by the judgments and criticism of other men. He must find it within himself in his own mind (cf. Rom. i. 28, vii. 23, xii. 2; Col. ii. 16).

6. Both parties are supposed to be living sincerely in fellowship with and under the will of Christ. **regardeth the day.** R.V. omits the next clause, "and he that regardeth not . . . not regard it." **for he giveth God thanks.** Whether it be meats or herbs which he eats, the Christian

man receives them from God's hands and "says grace," or expresses gratitude for them. **to the Lord he eateth not.** He who refrains from meat, he too gives thanks, and so proves that his restraint is in relation to Christ.

7, 8. These verses strike the fundamental principle of the Christian life. It is ethical throughout and therefore individual, and yet the individualism which we must picture is not that of a solitary self, but of a being living in persistent relations with Christ, who pervades his whole life. The Christian man does not find his motives or rules of life or his purposes in life within his own reason, but within the relations in which he stands to the Lord. This applies to life as a whole, and even to death. So overmastering is the power of Christ, so permeating the influence of His authority. A man has received life and he will receive death from his Master, and he must take each and use each in that Master's name.

9. **Christ both died, and rose, and revived.** R.V., "Christ died, and lived again." The reference here is to the Resurrection, but the verb is used thus only in Rev. ii. 8, xiii. 14, xx. 4, 5. Alike Christ's death and His becoming alive again were steps or means by which He became Lord in the most complete sense "of both the dead and the living" (R.V.). Cf. Phil. ii. 9–11.

10. **But why dost thou.** R.V., "But thou, why dost thou," etc. **or why dost thou.** R.V., "or thou again, why dost thou." The Apostle addresses both parties in the same severe form which he adopted in ver. 4, as if to say, "Who are you that you should dare to act as lord of the other, you who assume to judge, or you who dare

to despise your brother?" He answers the question by assuming that they are shamed into silence by the overwhelming argument that no man has a right thus to condemn or to despise, since **we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.** R.V., "the judgment seat of God" (cf. 2 Cor. v. 10). The word translated "stand before" is literally we shall "present ourselves" before, and occurs above (xii. 1). As here we present ourselves to God for His service, then we shall present ourselves to God for His judgment.

11. The Apostle supports this by quoting Isa. xlv. 23, 24, Greek trans. (cf. Phil. ii. 10 f.). **confess to God.** R.V. *margin*, "give praise." This word is used of the confession of sins (Matt. iii. 6), or the utterance of praise (Matt. xi. 25; Rom. xv. 9).

12. **So then every one.** R.V., "So then each one." This most emphatic statement winds up the first part of the discussion (cf. Matt. xii. 36 and 1 Pet. iv. 5).

(*b*) Responsibility for social influence (xiv. 13–23).

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but
judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an
14 occasion to fall in his brother's way. I know, and am
persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean
of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean,
15 to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with
thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not
16 him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then
17 your good be evil spoken of: for the kingdom of God is
not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy
18 in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth

19 Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us
therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and
20 things wherewith one may edify another. For meat destroy
not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it
21 is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good
neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing where-
by thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.
22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is
he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he
23 alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because
he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

The Apostle turns to another phase of the question. He concentrates attention upon the fact that each man's conduct has an influence upon that of the other. In a living brotherhood mutual influence is inevitable. Now the influence of the weak brother upon the strong cannot presumably interfere with the clear judgment of the latter's own conscience; but, on the contrary, the strong man may, by acting as he believes to be right in the matter under dispute, produce confusion in the conscience of the weak man. The worst thing which the strong man can do is to lead the weak man to act against his conscience. This is simply to ruin him, and where this effect is produced for the sake of such things as food-stuffs, the responsibility of the strong man is very heavy. He must learn to keep his own judgment clear, but to exercise it with a sense of responsibility for his brother; and he must maintain this clearness of judgment not by acting upon it to the injury of his brother, but by rejoicing in it before God. For the deep principle underlying the whole matter is that the man who performs any action while doubtful about its right-

eousness brings himself under the condemnation of God. This is the danger into which the strong man by his influence may drag the weak.

13. **Let us not therefore judge,** etc. The new argument presupposes the former one which is here repeated (cf. ii. 2; 1 Cor. iv. 1–5). **but judge this rather.** R.V., "but judge ye this rather." The word "judge" is sometimes used for making up one's mind, deciding upon a mode of conduct, as in 1 Cor. ii. 2, vii. 37; 2 Cor. ii. 1; Acts xx. 16, xxvii. 1. **stumblingblock or an occasion to fall.** R.V., "or an occasion of falling" (cf. Rom. ix. 32 ff.; 1 Cor. viii. 9, x. 32; and Matt. xviii. 1–14). The strong man may, perhaps heedlessly, make his free conduct a great danger to the man whom he calls his brother.

14. **I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus.** R.V., "in the Lord Jesus." The Apostle here openly takes his place on the side of those whom he calls "the strong" and accounts for his persuasion by his sense of inward fellowship with Jesus, who is the Lord of his life. The Lord Jesus has taught him **that there is nothing unclean of itself**: perhaps another echo of the recorded teaching of our Lord (Mark vii. 14–23; cf. Acts x. 14–28). In this statement the Apostle asserts the liberty of the Christian man to handle all things in nature in the spirit of freedom. **to him that esteemeth.** R.V., "save that to him who accounteth." This is the converse of the other statement. The Apostle with piercing anxiety understands that if a man, for even a wrong reason, believes that a certain object is in itself unclean—that is, forbidden by God for his use—as long as that is his opinion the thing is actually for him unclean.

He cannot abandon his conscience and merely act upon the conscience of the strong man.

15. **But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat.** R.V., "For if because of meat thy brother is grieved." **now walkest thou not charitably.** R.V., "thou walkest no longer in love." The grief here is probably not the mere resentment which the weak man may feel at the action of the strong man, but it is that grief which will be awakened in his conscience if the weak man is allowed to treat as clean that which he believes to be unclean. If the strong man has brought this about he has forsaken the principle of love as the rule of action. **Destroy not,** etc. This startling and broad command goes to the root of the matter. The life of a man is in his conscience, and that life is destroyed if he is influenced to act against his conscience. The man who so influences him is, therefore, counteracting the force of the cross of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. x. 32, 33).

16. **Let not then your good be evil spoken of.** Lit., "be blasphemed." The word for good, while used in varied senses by the Apostle, seems to refer here to the boon of liberty which the strong man consciously possesses. If he uses it to override the conscience of his brother his liberty will become the object even of an unholy hatred. In Philem. 14 an interesting parallel occurs, where the Apostle wishes his friend's "goodness" to consist in his free choice regarding Onesimus. (Cf. 1 Cor. x. 29, where his own liberty in a parallel situation is at stake.)

17. The great motive for mutual charity, the very ground for letting love rule, even over personal judgment, is the fact of the kingdom of

God. The man who lives in that kingdom knows that the substance of it is not to be found in bodily acts, but in the principle "of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." These are the real riches of the kingdom. We must not pare down these words to any partial meaning. Righteousness in all its senses is before the Apostle's mind. Joy is frequently connected with the Holy Spirit (Rom. xv. 13; 1 Thess. i. 6; Gal. v. 22; cf. Acts xiii. 52; 1 John i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 8). While the Apostle usually speaks of the kingdom of God in reference to its full establishment at the appearing of Christ, he recognizes its presence wherever the reign of Christ has actually begun over human hearts (cf. 1 Cor. iv. 20).

18. **in these things.** R.V., "herein." It is in these deep principles of the kingdom of God that a man realizes the service of Christ. **acceptable.** R.V., "well-pleasing." **approved of men.** The Apostle recognizes that the judgment of men is an important matter. It may, indeed, become a source of danger, and a man must not deliberately make it a goal of life (cf. 2 Cor. xiii. 7).

19. **Let us therefore follow after.** R.V., "So then let us follow after (*margin*, we follow)." Literally this may be read, "So then we pursue things which make for peace." Peace here, as above, in all senses of the word—the weak man's peace with God, the peace of mutual love between brethren—must be sedulously sought. **and things wherewith,** etc. R.V., "whereby we may edify one another." Paul's mind for some reason ran much on this word when writing to Corinth, the verb and noun occurring fifteen times in these two letters. It means "to build," and arises from his

conception of the Christian unity as a structure which is being raised, and within which a household life is being lived.

20. **For meat destroy not the work of God.** R.V., "Overthrow not for meat's sake." The work of God is the building which is being reared by His Spirit, and of which each man is a part (cf. 1 Cor. iii. 10–17; Eph. ii. 19–22). **All things indeed are pure.** R.V., "are clean" (cf. Tit. i. 15). This is the positive side of the statement (ver. 14) that "nothing is unclean of itself." The second part of ver. 14 is repeated here in other words. The clean thing becomes evil for the man who in partaking of it has his conscience offended (cf. on Rom. ix. 32, 33, xiv. 13). As Dr. Denney well puts it, "All meat is clean but not all eating."

21. **It is good,** etc. The word for good means something fine and noble. The man who will abstain from these indulgences for the sake of his brother, even when feeling that the latter's conscience is a confused conscience, is performing an act of moral beauty. R.V. inserts only in *margin* the last two clauses "or is offended, or is weak."

22. **Hast thou faith?** etc. R.V., "The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God." The strong man who rejoices in his faith that all things are clean must keep it as a matter between himself and God. Even that clear judgment must be cherished with a sense of responsibility. **happy is he that condemneth not.** R.V., "judgeth not." **alloweth.** R.V., "approveth (*margin*, putteth to the test)." He is indeed to be felicitated who has this clear conscience and for himself has come into its light, but he must remember ever his unceasing relations with others.

23. **And he that doubteth is damned if he eat.** R.V., "But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat." This is addressed to the strong man. Happy in his own clear conscience, he must watch over the doubting man who comes under the very condemnation of God if he eateth while in doubt. Only a clear faith, only a sure judgment can stand before the scrutiny of God's Spirit. The Apostle sums it all up in the saying **whatsoever is not of faith is sin.** Faith in God through Jesus Christ is a theme of the whole epistle. Here it stands out suddenly as the source of the whole reorganization of society, the whole transforming of the relations of men. Only when this faith, realizing itself in a life of love, of considerateness for the deepest interest of other men, which is the state of their conscience, has become the actual moulding force of society can the new structure be raised, which is the temple of God.

(*c*) Summary of the situation (xv. 1–13).

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of
2 the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of
3 us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For
even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, *The*
4 *reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.* For
whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for
our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the
5 Scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience
and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward
6 another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one
mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our
7 Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as
8 Christ also received us, to the glory of God. Now I say

that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the
9 fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy: as it is written, *For this cause I will confess to*
10 *thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.* And
11 again he saith, *Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.* And again, *Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all*
12 *ye people.* And again, Esaias saith, *There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles;*
13 *in him shall the Gentiles trust.* Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

For the connection of this with the preceding chapter see the Introduction. In any case, it is easy to see that the paragraph before us is immediately connected in thought and language with the argument of chap. xiv., especially in its opening statements (vers. 1, 2). It then cites the example of Christ as foreshadowed in Scripture language (vers. 3, 4); then offers a prayer for unity of mind among the Roman Christians (vers. 5, 6); cites further Scripture to show that even between Jew and Gentile Christ has come to establish unity according to the purpose of God (vers. 7–12); and then closes with a prayer of intercession on behalf of the whole community of Roman Christians (ver. 13).

1. **We then that are strong.** R.V., "Now we," etc. The Apostle once more classes himself with those whom throughout the argument he describes as the strong, those who had no conscientious objections arising from the use of meat or wine, or the non-observance of sacred days. **to bear.** Cf. Gal. vi. 2 ff. It is a burden for the man with a free conscience on such matters

to have patience with the scruples of his brother. **infirmities of the weak.** The words almost carry with them a tone of contempt, which may be brought out by the literal translation, "the weaknesses of the impotent." Although inwardly the Apostle has not much respect for the judgment of these brethren, he yet cherishes profound reverence for their conscience, and will therefore remember as a burden their error that he may save their honour. **not to please ourselves.** To be well-pleasing to God is the ideal of the Christian purpose, but that can only be realized by men in whom love reigns supreme. Selfishness is devious and is hateful to God. Yet we must remember that there is a pleasing of men which is evil, as Gal. i. 10, vi. 6.

2. **Let every one of us.** R.V., "Let each one of us." **for his good.** R.V., "for that which is good." The strong must not merely try to please the individual with a weak acquiescence, but must keep before him the purpose for which he yields his own judgment. It is to secure a greater good, namely, the purity of his neighbour's conscience, and this unto edifying, that the building of God's house may proceed. To act otherwise is to tear it down.

3. **For even Christ.** R.V., "For Christ also," etc. The Apostle appeals to the fact that Christ lived wholly for others and endured unnamed and unnumbered burdens. A suggestion of these burdens is given in the quotation from Scripture (Ps. lxix. 10). It is curious that the Apostle does not refer to any event or act in Christ's life, but falls back upon this strange adaptation of a phrase in the Psalter. This is explicable only because of his conviction that Scripture represents the very

mind of God. The words of the Psalmist are, however, diverted from their original meaning. What a man says to God in that Psalm Christ is represented here as addressing to every man. (It is to be noted that this 69th Psalm is quoted with great frequency in the N.T. John ii. 17 quotes ver. 9; John xv. 25, ver. 4; Matt. xxvii. 34, ver. 21; Rom. xi. 9, ver. 22; Acts i. 20, ver. 25.)

4. **written aforetime.** Cf. 2 Tim. iii. 16. This verse is almost a parenthesis. The Apostle asserts that the Scripture writings, for only these does he think of, were by Divine foresight and provision prepared for the instruction of us Christians. But here, as in the passage in Timothy, the function of these Scriptures is said to be moral and spiritual. They were intended to strengthen against trial and in sorrow the hearts of men. **patience and hope.** Cf. v. 3, viii. 25. Hope, as we learn from ver. 13, is a boon which rises out of the faith which Christ has awakened and which God confirms by His written word.

5. The Apostle offers a brief and beautiful prayer of intercession on behalf of his Roman brethren. It is addressed to **the God of patience and consolation** (R.V., "comfort"). Cf. 2 Cor. i. 3. The object of the prayer is that they may come to be **likeminded** (R.V., "of the same mind"). This cannot mean, of course, that they should all hold the same opinions, for it is evident they do not, and the prayer is based upon that fact. But there may be a difference of opinion and yet a unity of mind **according to Christ Jesus** (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 17; Col. ii. 8; Rom. viii. 27). This phrase is not an appeal to the character but to the authority of Jesus Christ. It is His will that men

should live in accord of spirit, even when they have differences of judgment on matters of conduct.

6. The ultimate aim of this like-mindedness is said to be the glorifying of God. **that ye may,** etc. R.V., "that with one accord," etc. The Greek word is used here whose significance comes out in Acts i. 14, ii. 46, v. 12. **one mouth.** This powerful expression emphasizes the unity of faith and joy, the inner harmony of spirit which finds expression in the praise of God. **God, even the Father of,** etc. R.V., "the God and Father of," etc. Paul uses this phrase also in 2 Cor. i. 3, xi. 31; Eph. i. 3. In its fulness it is a marvellous title of that Godhead which we worship, for in calling Him the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the very name of Christ is taken up into an intimacy of union with the name of God which must be eternal, and which belongs to the very essence of Christ Himself.

7. **Wherefore receive ye one another.** These words are addressed to the weak as well as to the strong, and describe their mutual duty, basing the exhortation upon the fact that Christ had Himself already in His royal grace received them all. **received us.** R.V., "received you" (*margin*, "us"). We may connect the words **to the glory of God** either with the first or the second clause. The meaning is not altered, for whether it is Christ who received us for that end, or we that received one another because Christ so received us, the end is the same for all concerned. Perhaps there is a reminder that Christ had to receive us who differ far more from Him in judgment and character than we, whether weak or strong, differ, or can differ, from one

another. No burden we bear can equal the burden He bears; no gulf can our charity cross wider than His grace has crossed to reach and take hold of us.

8. **Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister.** R.V., "For I say that Christ hath been made a minister." The Apostle passes out here from the relation of the weak and the strong to that of the Jew and the Gentile, and many have surmised that this indicates that most of the scrupulous vegetarians and observers of sacred days were Jews, and perhaps all of those who ignored these things were Gentiles. Hence the need for once more emphasizing the unity of the two racial groups in Christ. Christ is said here to have been a **minister,** literally, a servant or deacon of circumcision who came under the law. He fulfilled the Jewish covenant; He manifested to the utmost the faithfulness of God to His ancient promise made to the fathers (cf. Gal. iv. 4, 5; Eph. ii. 11–18). **for the truth of God.** That the faithfulness of God to His ancient promises might be realized and established (2 Cor. i. 10).

9. But Christ was made a minister for another reason. **that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.** The Gentiles are overwhelmed by one aspect of God's grace, His pitifulness, His power to rescue them from their unfathomed woe. The aspect presented to the Jew is His faithfulness, His loyalty to the word once given, and the long patience now consummated. The quotation is from Ps. xviii. 50, Greek trans. **For this cause I will confess to thee.** R.V., "Therefore will I give praise unto thee" (cf. Rom. xiv. 11).

10. Quotes Deut. xxxii. 43, Greek trans.

11. Quotes Ps. cxvii. 1, Greek trans. **and laud**

him, all ye people. R.V., "and let all the people praise him."

12. Quotes Isa. xi. 10. **he that shall rise to reign.** R.V., "he that ariseth to rule." **in him shall the Gentiles trust.** R.V., "hope." Throughout these quotations, characterized by a reference to the joy of the Gentiles at the revelation of Jehovah's might and grace to them all, we are to recognize the purpose of the Apostle, which is to emphasize the unity of Jew and Gentile now established through the ministry of Christ. This unity is the very end and aim of His incarnation, His death, and His resurrection. It is one of the main topics of discussion in Ephesians and Colossians.

13. This verse abounds with the new sense of confidence which the gospel has awakened in the human heart. No religion has ever awakened such emotions, containing within them not merely the promise of future blessedness but the vision of a blessedness which fills all men even now. Hope the Apostle recognizes as one of the very springs of life, and he prays that his readers may abound in it.

PART V. PERSONALIA.

(Rom. xv. 14–xvi. 27.)

These paragraphs constitute the epilogue to the Apostle's great message to the church in Rome. (1) The first paragraph describes the spirit of his apostleship (xv. 14–21). (2) Then he describes and discusses his plans for visiting Rome, a matter to which he had already referred in the first chapter (xv. 22–29). (3) This is followed with a brief plea

for their intercession on his behalf as he apprehends the great danger involved in his projected visit to Jerusalem (xv. 30–33). (4) A personal introduction (xvi. 1, 2). (5) Then follows a long list of personal salutations (xvi. 3–16). (6) A brief but stern warning against divisions is introduced, mitigated by a restatement of his confidence in their devotion (xvi. 17–20). (7) A group of companions who are around him as he writes unite in sending their greetings (xvi. 21–23). (8) Finally, we have the sublime doxology (xvi. 25–27).

Rom. xv. 14–21.

1. THE SPIRIT OF PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP.

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that
ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able
15 also to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren,
I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as
putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to
16 me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ
to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the
offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being
17 sanctified by the Holy Ghost. I have therefore whereof
I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which
18 pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of
those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to
19 make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through
mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of
God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto
Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.
20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where
Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's
21 foundation: but as it is written, *To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.*

The Apostle offers a half apology for the frankness with which he has written to them (vers. 14, 15). He explains, however, that this was done in the fulfilment of his task as the minister of Christ, in whom alone his confidence and boasting are grounded (vers. 16, 17). He will suggest rather than dwell upon the great work which Christ has done through his apostleship over a large portion of the Empire where he has gone, always in regions untouched by other apostles, that he might establish the gospel in new regions (vers. 18–21).

14. **And I myself also.** The half-apologetic tone is better brought out by saying, "Even I myself am persuaded of you." He feels that he has spoken with great frankness and freedom, but asserts his conviction that this arises from no suspicion of their failure. **full of goodness.** On the contrary, he knows them to be possessed of that good-heartedness and uprightness which characterize the men of Christ (Gal. v. 22; 2 Thess. i. 11; Eph. v. 9). **all knowledge.** Much as he has tried to teach them, he is convinced also that they are well grounded in the full Christian truth. This is a most significant and valuable testimony, for it establishes the fact that the churches which arose in different parts of the Empire arose upon the same fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. The words "full" and "filled" are used in a strikingly different context in i. 29. **admonish one another.** He recognizes also that they have both authority and qualification for mutual instruction.

15. **Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort.** R.V., "But I write the more boldly unto you in some

measure." The word for "measure" is usually interpreted as meaning "part of the epistle." It is not certain to what he refers. If he is thinking of some one part, then it is most likely chap. xiv., where he dealt so boldly with what must have been a delicate situation. If he is thinking of various portions of the letter, he is probably referring to the bold exposure of sin in the earlier chapters and the personal exhortations and direction which began with chap. xii. **as putting you in mind.** R.V., "as putting you again in remembrance." **the grace that is given.** R.V., "the grace that was given." He is referring, of course, to the grace of apostleship (cf. i. 5, xii. 3; Eph. iii. 7; Col. i. 25 ff.).

16. **the minister of Jesus Christ.** R.V., "a minister of Christ Jesus." Same word as in xiii. 6, implying an official, perhaps even a priestly, service. **ministering the gospel of God.** R.V. *margin*, "and ministering in sacrifice." **that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable.** R.V., "might be made acceptable." The three words used here, drawn from functions of the priesthood, are often understood to mean that the Apostle thinks of himself as a priest "standing at the altar as priest of the gospel." The offering which he makes is the Gentile Church—an interpretation which is by no means necessary Definitely the Apostle describes himself as ministering the gospel. If this is the priestly office, it means that he is representing God among men as a priest was supposed to do, and what he brings to them as the great blessing of God is His gospel. There is no necessity for believing that the phrase "the offering up of the Gentiles" refers to his

offering them up at the last day, which would surely be a most daring and un-Pauline conception (yet cf. the modified form of statement, Col. i. 28). There is nothing to prevent our understanding "the offering up of the Gentiles" as being their own act in response to the ministry of the gospel. (Cf. Heb. x. 10, where the offering up of the body of Jesus Christ is, of course, performed by Himself.) The Apostle does not say distinctly who offers the Gentiles. It is more natural to connect this with xii. 1, where they are exhorted to present themselves in sacrifice to God. **being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.** Instead of outward tests applied to the ancient sacrifices, which were to be without spot or blemish, the new test is here said to be the fruit of the Spirit.

17. **I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ.** R.V., "I have therefore my glory in Christ Jesus." The human impulse to rejoice (cf. Phil. ii. 17) and to boast is unrestrainable even in Paul; but it is an admirable trait when it is rightly conditioned. The two essential conditions are named by him here: first, his boasting is in Christ Jesus; second, it is concerned with the things of God (cf. Heb. ii. 17).

18. **For I will not dare.** The emphatic word, rendered "more boldly" in ver. 15, is echoed here. **to speak of any of those things,** etc. R.V., "to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me." Either translation is correct, but the meaning slightly different. In the one case (A.V.) the Apostle means that he will not attempt to describe the triumphs of the other apostles. In the other case he means that he will not dare to tell them of anything in his own life or achieve-

ment except what Christ has done through him as a mere instrument of the Divine will. **to make the Gentiles obedient.** R.V., "for the obedience of the Gentiles." **by word,**—that is, by his preaching. **and deed,**—that is, all else in his active life which contributed to his work and its success.

19. **through mighty signs and wonders.** R.V., "in the power of signs and wonders." N.T. uses three words for what we call miracles. They all occur in Acts ii. 22; 2 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Cor. xii. 12; Heb. ii. 4. Two words—wonders and signs—always occur together, the one expressing the idea of power and the other that of significance. A miracle in the N.T. is a work which not merely manifests superhuman energy, but contains a Divine meaning and message. The word "power" refers in this verse not to the miracles themselves, but to the influence which they had upon those who saw them. The Apostle always claims that his work was accompanied by such manifestations of the might of God (cf. 2 Cor. xii. 12). **so that,** etc. R.V., "even unto Illyricum." The word "round about" is applied by some to the vicinity of Jerusalem, but most generally understood as describing the sweep of his journeyings from Jerusalem through Samaria, Asia Minor, Macedonia, to that point at which he was nearest to Rome. We have no record of any work done by the Apostle in Illyricum, but Acts xx. 1 ff. would allow of his touching the confines of that region, whether he actually preached there or not. **I have fully preached.** R.V. *margin*, "fulfilled" (cf. Col. i. 25). The Apostle has given full expression to the meaning and message of the gospel and its claim to universal dissemination.

20. **Yea, so have I strived to preach.** R.V., "yea, making it my aim so to preach (*margin*, being ambitious)." For the word "strive" or "being ambitious," cf. 1 Thess. iv. 11 ("study"); 2 Cor. v. 9 ("labour"). The Apostle insists that he has counted it a matter of personal honour not to go whither others had already preceded him, "where Christ was *already* named" (R.V.). He has made it a rule not to build upon the foundations laid by another apostle (1 Cor. iii. 10; 2 Cor. x. 15, 16).

21. For this admirable rule of missionary policy, which enabled the apostles to spread the gospel so rapidly through the Roman Empire, he gives as an authority or inspiring motto a quotation from Isa. lii. 11 (Gr. trans.). **To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see.** R.V., "They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came."

Rom. xv. 22–29.

2. PLANS FOR VISITING ROME.

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from
23 coming to you. But now having no more place in these
parts, and having a great desire these many years to come
24 unto you; whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I
will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey,
and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I
25 be somewhat filled with your company. But now I go
26 unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath
pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain
contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.
27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are.
For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their
spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in
28 carnal things. When therefore I have performed this, and

have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into
29 Spain. And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I
shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of
Christ.

The Apostle proceeds to sketch the plans which he has formed for his future journeys. He repeats what he had already told them (i. 11 ff.) of his longing to visit Rome, but he has a fixed purpose to carry the gospel into Spain, and his plan is not to make Rome a place of prolonged labour, but to visit the church there for his and their spiritual refreshment. In the meantime he has a pressing duty, namely, to carry to Jerusalem the contributions which he has received from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia for relief of the extensive poverty which obtains among the Christians in the sacred city. When he has fulfilled this duty he will proceed to visit Rome on his way to Spain.

22. **For which cause also I have been much hindered.** R.V., "Wherefore also I was hindered these many times." He tells us in i. 13 that he has been prevented, much against his will, from going to Rome. The A.V. *margin* suggests as alternatives for "much" the words "many ways" or "often times." But nowhere does he tell us what these obstacles have been. Perhaps his long labour in connection with the collection about to be referred to was one of them. **hindered.** The word occurs in a similar connection (1 Thess. ii. 18) where he says Satan hindered a projected visit (cf. Gal. v. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 7).

23. **having no more place in these parts.** R.V., "having no more any place in these regions." The word "place" is used in xii. 19, Eph. iv. 27

in the sense of opportunity or scope for action. He feels that his particular kind of work as a pioneer missionary in the regions of his great missionary journeys has been finished. The foundations of strong churches have been securely laid (cf. ver. 20), and he purposes to go into regions as yet unreached by the great message. **in these parts.** R.V., "regions." **a great desire.** R.V., "a longing." It must have been a continual disappointment to him that he was unable to reach the great centre of imperial influence.

24. **Whensoever I take my journey into Spain.** R.V., "I go into." We have no record of his having reached Spain. **I will come to you.** These words are omitted by R.V. They must have been inserted by a copyist who wished to fill out the uncompleted sentence of ver. 23. R.V. rightly puts the remainder of the sentence in parenthesis. Paul breaks off from the original statement, first saying that he wishes to see them on his way to Spain, and then to explain that he cannot even yet start out for Spain because of his duty at Jerusalem. This he describes through vers. 25–27, and in ver. 28 returns to complete the statement begun in ver. 23. **for I trust.** R.V., "I hope." He emphasizes the fact that this visit is to be an incident in his journey, an occasion for a temporary service and for Christian fellowship (cf. i. 11, 12). **to be brought on my way.** Lit., "to be sent forth." In a letter written to the very church from which he is writing this letter he uses the same expression (1 Cor. xvi. 5, 11). Illustrations of this sending forth are to be found in Acts xv. 3, xxi. 5, xx. 38. **if first I be somewhat filled.** R.V., "if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied."

He hopes, of course, to be filled with joy in his fellowship with them, but he can only stay long enough to be partially satisfied. There is no doubt expressed by the word "if," rather does he take for granted that this desire of his heart will most certainly be realized.

25. **But now I go.** R.V., "but now, *I say,* I go." He breaks off here to explain why he is not setting out for Spain at once. He is about to start for Jerusalem to minister (R.V. "ministering") (2 Cor. viii. 4; Acts xxiv. 17). He is on a mission of service to those whom he simply classes as "the saints," meaning, of course, the Christian believers.

26. **For it hath pleased them of Macedonia,** etc. R.V., "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia," etc. Though the Apostle suggested and urged the collection (2 Cor. ix. 1–15) he insists always that their ready and generous response proved it to have been their goodwill to do this thing. On the word for "good pleasure," cf. Rom. x. 1; 1 Cor. i. 21; Gal. i. 15. **a certain contribution.** The word translated "contribution" is elsewhere translated "fellowship" or "communion." It is frequently used in Scripture of communion in spiritual things (cf. Phil. iii. 10; Philem. 6; 1 Cor. i. 9; x. 16). But it is naturally extended to participation in worldly goods, and hence is used almost technically for a collection (2 Cor. vii. 13; Heb. xiii. 16). **for the poor saints.** R.V., "for the poor among the saints." There must have been some in the Jerusalem church who were not poor, but the vast majority for some reason or another seem to have lived in great distress. This appeared early (cf. Acts vi. 1–4). It may have arisen from persecution or the withdrawal of the

subsidies which many of the Jewish citizens had been accustomed to receive from the wealthy classes. These subsidies would be withheld from those who became Christian believers. **Macedonia and Achaia.** The Apostle speaks in this way because the churches in those regions were so strong and so well established. It is almost like the dawn of the use of our word "Christendom."

27. **It has pleased them verily.** R.V., "Yea, it has been their good pleasure." The Apostle emphasizes the fact of the goodwill of these Gentile Christians towards the Jewish Christians. It is one of the great triumphs and joys of his whole ministry that he has brought this about, and he probably expected a greater return in spiritual unity than the future brought to him. **debtors** (cf. Gal. v. 3; Rom. i. 4, viii. 12). The Apostle uses this word where he sees a heavy moral obligation. The Gentile churches can never disown their indebtedness to the church at Jerusalem from which the gospel sprang and spread over the world. **their duty is also.** R.V., "they owe it *to them* also." Elsewhere the Apostle contrasts spiritual and carnal things (1 Cor. ix. 11). "Carnal things" is used as we speak of secular things or temporalities; no ethical quality is assigned to them. The Gentiles have received great treasures for the life of the Spirit, and they may well consider themselves under obligation, where there is so great need as at Jerusalem, to repay that debt with secular gifts. **to minister.** The same word is used in xiii. 6, xv. 16, and implies that the Gentiles should consider this an opportunity for a sacred service. It is not a mere secular debt. Its payment can only come from

goodwill and under force of the religious consciousness.

28. Now the Apostle completes the unfinished statement of ver. 23. **have performed.** R.V., "accomplished." He uses the same word in relation to this very collection in 2 Cor. viii. 6, 11. **sealed** (cf. iv. 11; Eph. i. 13). **fruit** (cf. Phil. iv. 17). The Apostle may mean either that he shall have formally passed over the money which has been entrusted to him, and secure it in possession of those for whom it was intended, or he may mean that, having actually given the money ("accomplished this"), he will have so given to the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem an undeniable proof of the true spirit possessed by his Gentile converts. This will be fruit of the Spirit which they will appreciate. Perhaps his memory is running back to the incident referred to in Gal. ii. 10.

29. **And I am sure that.** R.V., "And I know that." He closes this paragraph with the note of Christian certainty. He will arrive in Rome conscious that he is under the direction of Christ, and that his work there will receive His approval and be a means of blessing both to himself and to the Roman church. **the blessing of the gospel of Christ.** R.V., "the blessing of Christ." The word for "blessing" in N.T. occurs in a large variety of connections: in Eph. i. 3 the Apostle speaks of spiritual blessing; in 1 Cor. ix. 5 it is translated "bounty"; in Rom. xvi. 18 it is used in a sinister sense, "fair speech" (cf. 1 Cor. x. 16).

Rom. xv. 30–33.

3. A PLEA FOR INTERCESSION.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's
sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together
31 with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be
delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and
that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be ac-
32 cepted of the saints; that I may come unto you with joy
33 by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. Now
the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

The Apostle now makes a strong appeal to the Romans for earnest, striving prayer on his behalf (ver. 30), and he names three blessings for which they should intercede. First, that he may be kept in safety from the dangerous hatred of the Jews in Judea. Second, that the great collection which he has made may be well received by those for whom it was intended (ver. 31). Third, that he may reach Rome in joy and there have rest in their fellowship (ver. 32), and he prays the God of peace to be with them (ver. 33).

30. **Now I beseech.** Rather should we read "but I beseech you," for in spite of his confidence (ver. 29) he knows the dangers ahead of him, and the mysteriousness of the Divine will. For a similar condition of faith and apprehension, cf. Phil. i. 22–26. The Apostle was very human, and his mighty faith did not lift him above the possibilities of disappointment and the natural tremors of the foreseeing mind. As a matter of fact, his confidence was so far justified that he did reach Rome, but as a prisoner after a long delay. **for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake.** R.V., "by our Lord

Jesus Christ." As he beseeches them (xii. 1) by the mercies of God, so here by the name of Jesus Christ, for it is on Christ that both the Roman Christians and he depend, and from him the motive of prayer as well as its content is derived. **and for the love of the Spirit.** R.V., "and by the love of the Spirit." We hear that love is one fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22). The Apostle speaks of love in the Spirit (Col. i. 8); also, he speaks of the spirit of love (2 Tim. i. 7). The best commentary on all these passages is Eph. iii. 16–18. **that ye strive together with me.** The word used here carries with it the idea of wrestling. For him prayer is hard work (cf. Col. ii. 1, 2, iv. 12). Even across a wide ocean he realizes that these men could labour with him in this matter, and that their labour together may not be in vain. **to God for me.** The emphasis would be better brought out by saying, "on my behalf towards God." It is not without emphasis that he here uses the three names, of Christ and Spirit and God, in this solemn appeal for the intercession of the Roman church on his behalf. All his future movements are under the direction of God (cf. ver. 32).

31. **them that do not believe.** R.V., "them that are disobedient" (cf. xi. 30; Heb. iii. 18). A strong passage on the hostility of the Judean Jews occurs in 1 Thess. ii. 14–16. The Apostle is aware of the extreme dangers into which he is going. They are vividly realized by reading Acts xx. 3, 17–38; xxi. 4, 10–14, and then from xxi. 17 onwards. **and that my service.** R.V., "my ministration." Some manuscripts have "my bearing of a gift to Jerusalem," and that may have

been the original reading. He fears lest even the Jewish Christians, out of hostility to the freedom of the Gentiles on which he has insisted, may maintain an extremely bitter attitude towards him and may fail to accept the gifts of their Gentile fellow-Christians in the spirit in which they were made. He wishes the Romans to pray that these saints may accept the gifts in the right spirit.

32. **with joy by the will of God.** R.V., "in joy through the will of God." **and may with you be refreshed.** R.V., "and together with you find rest." All depends on the directing will of God (cf. i. 10). On this refreshment to which he refers, cf. 2 Cor. vii. 13; Philem. 7, 20.

33. Having asked their prayers, the Apostle prays for them, and out of the turmoil of his heart and the darkness of his future his thought turns naturally to God, who is above all the turmoil, the God of peace. He prays that this God may be with them all. Here we must understand the word "peace" in all the variety and fulness of its meaning. Cf. its uses in i. 7, v. 1, viii. 6, xiv. 17, 19, xv. 13, 33, xvi. 20.

Rom. xvi. 1, 2.

4. A PERSONAL INTRODUCTION.

1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant
2 of the church which is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

1. **church.** This is the first time this word occurs in this Epistle. The Greek word for "church"

was applied by the Christians to the assemblies which they formed to distinguish them from the synagogues as well as from all other forms of organization of a voluntary sort. Paul uses the word, first and most generally, of individual local churches, in the singular or the plural. Second, he is said by some to use it of all the churches regarded as a unity. But this is not quite so certain, for in 1 Cor. x. 32, xii. 28, and 1 Tim. iii. 15 the word may apply to the local congregations, while in Gal. i. 13, Phil. iii. 6 he refers to a period when the only church in existence was that at Jerusalem, which he persecuted (cf., however, Acts xx. 28). In the third place, the Apostle uses it in a mystical sense for all believers regarded as the body of Christ, especially in Epistles to Ephesians and Colossians. **Cenchrea.** R.V., "Cenchreæ" (cf. Acts xviii. 18). This was a port on the Saronic Gulf less than ten miles from Corinth, from which this letter was written. As it was a busy seaport it was probably a meeting-place for many Christian travellers between Asia and Italy.

2. **in the Lord, as becometh saints.** R.V., "in the Lord, worthily of the saints." He urges that Phœbe should not be treated as a stranger or outsider, but taken right into the fellowship of the church. This alone is what Christ the Lord expects of those who hold the common faith. **business.** R.V., "matter." She seems to have been engaged in some important secular affairs on this journey to Rome. She evidently was a woman of wealth. Perhaps, like Lydia, she had a business in connection with which she was on her journey to Rome. **for she hath been a succourer of many.** R.V., "for she herself also." The word for "succourer"

is that used of a civic official of Athens who cared for the strangers and those without civic rights. Paul uses the word to show that Phœbe had proved herself particularly careful of those Christians who were strangers at Cenchrea. Paul himself had been of that number. He may have taken refuge in her house either in sickness or in some time of persecution, or simply when making brief visits to Cenchrea from the neighbouring city of Corinth, where he worked so long.

Rom. xvi. 3–16.

5. PERSONAL SALUTATIONS.

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus:
4 who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom
not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the
5 Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house.
Salute my wellbeloved Epenetus, who is the first-fruits
6 of Achaia unto Christ. Greet Mary, who bestowed much
7 labour on us. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kins-
men, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among
8 the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. Greet
9 Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. Salute Urbane,
10 our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. Salute
Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of
11 Aristobulus' houshold. Salute Herodion my kinsman.
Greet them that be of the houshold of Narcissus, which
12 are in the Lord. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who
labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which
13 laboured much in the Lord. Salute Rufus chosen in the
14 Lord, and his mother and mine. Salute Asyncritus,
Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren
15 which are with them. Salute Philologus, and Julia,
Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints

16 which are with them. Salute one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

In the long list of personal salutations here given no name occurs, except those of Prisca and Aquila, of which we hear in any other part of the N.T. Two features stand out when we have surveyed the whole list: first, that some of them seem to have been Jews, whom he identifies as such by calling them "my kinsmen" (vers. 7, 11, 21); second, that a number of these persons may have been connected with the Imperial household, as many of these names occur in lists and inscriptions dating back to the beginning of the second century and even earlier, as names of slaves and freedmen attached in some way to "Cæsar's" household (Phil. iv. 22). Those who believe that this portion of the epistle must have become attached to it from another letter addressed to a church, say Ephesus, where Paul had laboured, have for their strongest argument the difficulty of accounting for the fact that he knows, and apparently knows well, so many people in a city which he had not visited. This may be met by two considerations: first, that the Apostle may have met some of these persons as they travelled from one portion of the Empire to another. All Christians from Rome who travelled eastwards would be glad of an opportunity to meet the great Apostle. In the second place, Paul may have come to know of the personalities of these people through their friends, and he sends greetings to them as one for whom they are not mere names but fellow-Christians whose qualities have been reported to him.

3. **Greet Priscilla and Aquila.** R.V., "Salute

Prisca and Aquila." This famous early Christian couple are first met in Acts xviii. 1–14. Their power and influence appear in Acts xviii. 18, 19, 24 ff. They are also referred to in 1 Cor. xvi. 19; 2 Tim. iv. 19. Much speculation has been indulged in, in reference to this interesting husband and wife. They seem to have been earnest and intelligent. Their circumstances compelled them, apparently, to travel much. Aquila, who is said to have been a Jew, was like Paul trained to the trade of a tent-maker and practised his calling. If, as some suppose, Prisca belonged to a noble family at Rome, they may have been impoverished by the banishment described in Acts xviii. 2. **my helpers in Christ Jesus.** R.V., "my fellow-workers." The Apostle probably emphasizes this phrase in his own mind, remembering that they had laboured as tent-makers side by side, but that their chief labour was in the gospel of Christ.

4. **who have for my life laid down their own necks.** It is uncertain what this statement means exactly, though there can be no doubt that the Romans understood it perfectly, for Paul says that all the churches of the Gentiles were filled with gratitude to them for their act. The word "laid down" had a technical use for "giving in pledge," and it may be that they had risked their own lives at some crisis by becoming security for the Apostle (cf. Acts xviii. 12 ff., xix. 30 ff.). **unto whom,** etc. The Apostle cherishes a permanent and deep gratitude which he knows is shared by all the Gentiles towards these two devoted people. **Gentiles.** It may be that the emphasis upon the word "Gentiles" refers to some occasion on which

he was in danger through the action of the Jews or even of the Jewish Christians.

5. **Likewise greet the church that is in their house.** R.V., "and salute," etc. We have no proof that any separate building was put up for Christian worship in Rome for several generations. The gatherings of believers took place in private houses. If, as seems certain, some persons belonging to the nobility or even to the Imperial household were baptized in the early days, their palaces would be most serviceable for this purpose. **Epenetus.** R.V., "Epænetus." This man was the first convert in the Roman Province of Asia. The Apostle, as we see from 1 Cor. xvi. 15, loved to think of those who were what he called the **firstfruits** of the gospel in a new region.

6. **Greet Mary.** R.V., "Salute Mary." It is not certain whether we should here read the Jewish name "Mariam" or the Roman "Marian," though most editors favour the latter. This woman distinguished herself for her activity in the Christian service, for the word "labour" is most frequently used by the Apostle for the preaching of the gospel (cf. Gal. iv. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 10, xvi. 16; Col. i. 29; 1 Tim. iv. 10, v. 17). **on us.** R.V., "on you."

7. **Andronicus and Junia.** R.V., "Junias (*margin*, Junia)." These persons may have been either husband and wife or two men, according as we read the second name. **kinsmen.** So called because they were Jews, and probably not as being relatives of the Apostle. **fellowprisoners.** The word used for "prisoner" refers to prisoners of war. "Paul and his friends were all Salvation Army men" (Denney). But is it necessary to assume that they had been in the same prison with

Paul? Would it not be very striking if he had called those his "fellowprisoners" who had been immured for Christ's sake in another land? **who are of note among the apostles.** It is uncertain whether Paul means that they were of note as apostles or highly esteemed by the apostles. Either meaning is good, although the former was most generally adopted by interpreters in the early Church. The word "apostle" was used in various references (cf. Acts xiv. 14). **who also were in Christ before me.** A much better translation than the R.V., "have been in Christ before me." These two must have been Christians in the earliest days of the gospel, and in that case most probably at Jerusalem, from which we may get a hint as to the sources from which the church at Rome arose. Perhaps their fame either as apostles or with the apostles may be traced to their having had some important part in the founding of that church.

8. **Greet Amplias.** R.V., "Salute Ampliatus." This was a common slave name. It is found in one of the Christian catacombs at Rome known as the Cemetery of Domitilla, a noble Roman lady who perished in a persecution toward the end of the first century. The name also occurs in a list of freedmen at the beginning of the second century. **my beloved.** We must remember that it was a slave, or one recently a slave, whom Paul addresses in this warm language. The secret of his love is in the conclusion of the phrase **in the Lord.**

9. **Urbane.** R.V., "Urbanus." Another common Roman slave name. **our helper in Christ.** R.V., "our fellow-worker." Evidently he had not

been a personal companion of Paul, hence the plural pronoun. **Stachys my beloved.** This man, on the other hand, must have had personal relations with the Apostle. His name is Greek, but it is found in an inscription as the name of a member of the Imperial household.

10. **Apelles.** This name was used in Roman households. The Roman poet Horace says "The Jew Apella may believe it, I do not," as if that name was counted a typical Jewish name at Rome. **approved.** R.V., "the approved." This word is used to describe the result of a process of testing, and means that Apelles had passed through some severe trial and had become publicly known as a man in Christ (cf. Jas. i. 12; Rom. xiv. 18; 1 Cor. xi. 19; 2 Cor. x. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 15). **of Aristobulus' houshold.** R.V., "of the *household* of Aristobulus." Herod the Great (Matt. ii. 1 ff.), father of the Herods mentioned in the gospel (Mark vi. 14 ff.), had a grandson, Aristobulus, who seems to have lived in Rome, and his household is probably referred to here as containing some believing Christians. Even if he had died before this, his household may have preserved its identity and retained his name.

11. **Herodion my kinsman.** A Jewish name drawn from that of Herod; perhaps connected with the household of Aristobulus. The Apostle means by the words "my kinsman" that he was of the Jewish race. **Greet them that be.** R.V., "Salute them." Narcissus was the name of a man who was put to death, probably two or three years before this letter was written, under Nero. He was a well-known freedman, and his household would probably become a part of Cæsar's house-

hold (Phil. iv. 22) and yet retain its identity. **which are in the Lord.** A clause difficult of interpretation. It might convey to readers familiar with the fact a feeling of joy or surprise that in such a household any should belong to the Christian faith. It may also mean that, while some of the household were Christians, others were definitely hostile to the new religion.

12. **Tryphena and Tryphosa.** R.V., "Tryphæna and Tryphosa." These were apparently sisters, and their names are derived from one root word which is translated as "delicately" in Jas. v. 5, Luke vii. 25, and as "revel" in 2 Pet. ii. 13. **who labour in the Lord.** In spite of commentators, it is not likely that Paul thought of any contrast between the root meaning of these women's names and their reputation for labouring in the Lord, as if their names belied their characters. **Persis.** Is called "the beloved," as being evidently one who had drawn out the confidence and affection of the community. **which laboured.** This past tense, in contrast with what is said in the previous sentence of the two sisters, would indicate that Persis for some reason was laid aside from active Christian service. It may have been age, or sickness, or some other disability, but she is still called "the beloved."

13. **Rufus chosen in the Lord.** R.V., "the chosen." The description means that he was of the *élite* among Christians, a man of fine type in faith and character. Some think that Mark wrote the Second Gospel while he was at Rome, and that this Rufus may be the same as is referred to in Mark xv. 21—both uncertain conjectures. **mother.** How or when the mother of Rufus had cared for

Paul, as this verse indicates, we do not know. For the idea, cf. John xix. 26, 27.

14. A group of names is here given of men who were in some way associated, and others unnamed belong to the group. They may have been in the habit of meeting for worship in one house. **Patrobas** is a contraction for Patrobius. He may have belonged to the household of a famous freedman of that name. The names **Hermas** and **Hermes** are interchanged in their position by R.V. Hermas is not to be identified, as was at one time frequently imagined, with the author of the well-known Christian work known as *The Shepherd*.

15. Salutations are sent to still another group, which from the concluding clause would seem to have been larger than the preceding one. The name **Julia** is a very common Roman name, and is said to be one "of the commonest family names among slaves of the Imperial household."

16. **a holy kiss** (cf. 1 Thess. v. 26; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Pet. v. 14). This religious salutation was apparently taken over from a Jewish custom. It became part of the regular form of public worship among early Christians. Origen traces it to this and other passages, but emphasizes the fact that the Apostle calls it "holy." **The churches of Christ.** R.V., "All the churches of Christ." Nowhere else does Paul speak of the church or churches as being "of Christ" (cf. note above, xvi. 1, and note on Acts xx. 28).

Rom. xvi. 17–20.

6. A WARNING AGAINST DIVISIONS.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause
divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye
18 have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such
serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and
by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the
19 simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men.
I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have
you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning
20 evil. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your
feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with
you. Amen.

This is felt by all readers to be an unexpected paragraph. And no explanation is conclusive. Some think it implies too close a knowledge of actual conditions to be found in the letter addressed by the Apostle to a church he had not visited; and this is used as one of their strong arguments by those who believe that this portion of the epistle was originally a separate letter sent to introduce Phœbe to the church at Ephesus, the Apostle adding personal greetings and this brief exhortation to his letter of introduction. On the other hand, it is to be noted that the paragraph has a curious indefiniteness. It does not definitely say that such persons were known by the Apostle to be working among those whom he addresses. Rather does he seem to be roused by recalling the fact that such men are at work in various places, and, in fear lest they should intrude upon the peace of the Roman Church, he utters this faithful and vigorous warning. The persons of whom he speaks are described in

general terms as causes of divisions, and they offer by their spirit and influence a hindrance to the gospel. They are self-interested in their propaganda, and do not manifest the spirit of those who are given over wholly to the service of Christ. They are insinuating and pleasing in their methods of argument. Probably their teaching led in the direction of self-indulgence, or even sensuality. The Apostle yearns over the Roman Christians, whose obedience he says is well known, lest they should be led astray. He would fain preserve that joy which he has in them, and he adds that their watchfulness shall only be for a brief season, for the day will shortly come when God shall put even Satan under their feet.

17. **Now I beseech you.** The Apostle breaks off from personal matters to give sudden expression to the earnest desire of his heart. **mark.** That is so as to beware of their true spirit and character. **cause divisions.** R.V., "are causing the divisions" (cf. Gal. v. 20). The use of the definite article would seem to imply that the Apostle refers to some well-known kind of disagreement, awakened either in the church he addresses or among several churches by a certain type of teaching. **offences.** R.V., "occasions of stumbling" (cf. xiv. 13; 1 Tim. vi. 1; 1 John ii. 10). **the doctrine.** R.V. *margin*, "teaching." **and avoid them.** R.V., "and turn away from them." The Apostle knows that his readers have been well instructed in the practical aspects of the gospel. He has dealt with some of these in this very letter (cf. chap. 6), and he warns his readers not in any way to tamper with contrary teachings, but rather to shun such teachers (cf. 1 Pet. iv. 11). All the more urgent would this

word sound if the teachings of these persons involved sensuality, from which the only refuge is to be found in flight.

18. **serve not our Lord Jesus Christ.** R.V., "our Lord Christ." The latter is the true reading, and the only case in which this particular form of title is used of the Saviour. **but their own belly.** In Phil. iii. 19 this phrase seems to be explained by the two following ones. Naturally it would suggest gross sensuality, but some think this is not its essential meaning but rather that it is a stinging and scornful phrase for those "who mind earthly things"; yet all concentration upon merely earthly interests does tend undoubtedly towards sensuality in the long-run. **and by good words and fair speeches.** R.V., "and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent." The latter version brings out better the feeling of subtlety and of plausibility, which seems to be involved in the Greek words here used. The latter word "fair speech" may imply flattery, or it may even suggest the use of "pious tones." **deceive.** R.V., "beguile" (cf. Rom. vii. 11; 1 Cor. iii. 18; 2 Cor. xi. 3; 2 Thess. ii. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 14). **simple.** R.V., "innocent." Probably the A.V. gives the better meaning to the Greek word. It is those who are without darkness in their own hearts who are very often led astray by the subtlety of those who can suggest good reasons for evil things.

19. The Apostle states one reason for his great interest in this matter. The people whom he addresses are well known for their obedience to the gospel, and he longs to know that this reputation is not going to be soiled. **I am glad there-**

fore on your behalf. R.V., "I rejoice therefore over you." On this spirit of joy, cf. Phil. ii. 17, 18. The Apostle desires that, instead of being easily caught by suggestions coming from a sinful source, they should be so morally established that they shall be wise in relation to the good as a whole, and that they shall be simple or harmless or inwardly pure in relation to the evil in all its forms. If the innocent are in danger of being beguiled, their only inward safety is to be found in a confirmed and sound wisdom, that is in a concentration of their attention and interest and activity upon all that is good, and in a condition in which they should be inwardly separated from, and therefore spontaneously hostile to, every suggestion of evil.

20. With this general conception in mind the Apostle assures them that the great name from whom all evil suggestions ultimately come shall be conquered on their behalf. **And the God of peace** (cf. 1 Thess. v. 23; Rom. xv. 33; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. iv. 9; Heb. xiii. 20). This beautiful conception of God is as startling here as the use of the word "peace" is in Phil. iv. 7, where peace is represented as an armed sentinel. **shall bruise Satan** (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 13–15). The allusion here is, of course, to Gen. iii. 15. The Apostle assures his readers that the warfare cannot last long. In his view the final victory will shortly be achieved and their deliverance fully accomplished. **The grace . . . with you.** This benediction, as R.V. points out in the *margin*, is inserted by some ancient authorities after ver. 23 (see Introduction). **Amen.** R.V. omits, except in *margin*.

Rom. xvi. 21–24.

7. GREETINGS FROM PAUL'S COMPANIONS.

21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and
22 Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you. I Tertius, who wrote
23 this epistle, salute you in the Lord. Gaius mine host, and
of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.
24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

21. The Apostle appends greetings from his companions, as frequently is his custom. **Timotheus my fellow-worker.** R.V., "Timothy." We hear first of this person in Acts. xvi. 1–3. To him were addressed the two letters bearing his name. In 2 Tim. i. 5 there is a reference to his mother and grandmother. In 1 Cor. iv. 17 the Apostle speaks of him with a great affection, "my beloved and faithful child in the Lord." He seems to have been for many years almost a constant companion of the Apostle, and is named in the salutations of no less than six letters, namely, 1 and 2 Thess., 2 Cor., Phil., Col., and Philem. **Lucius** (Acts xiii. 1), **Jason** (Acts xvii. 5–7), **Sosipater** (Acts xx. 4), are all mentioned by the Apostle as "kinsmen," by which, as we have seen above, he probably meant simply that they were of the Jewish race. The identification of these with those named in the passages cited from Acts is, of course, quite conjectural. **salute you.** These words are omitted in R.V.

22. **I Tertius, who wrote this epistle.** R.V., "who wrote the epistle." The R.V. *margin* gives as alternative translation, "who write the epistle in the Lord, salute you," but this is most certainly

not the true meaning. The Apostle here allows his amanuensis to speak in the first person, which many commentators mark as an act of gracious courtesy. It must be remembered that in no other letter, so far as we know, does the amanuensis send his personal greeting. There may be special reasons for allowing this peculiar form of salutation in this place.

23. **Gaius mine host.** R.V., "my host." Probably this man is mentioned in 1 Cor. i. 14, an indication that Gaius was a man of large means, in whose house the whole church met for worship, and with whom, while here at Corinth, the Apostle lived as a guest. This salutation may be taken as a slight sign that the Epistle to the Romans, or this portion of it, was written from Corinth. **Erastus the chamberlain of the city.** R.V., "the treasurer of the city." Cf. Acts xix. 22, where Erastus is associated with Timothy. Also 2 Tim. iv. 20, where Erastus is mentioned to Timothy. **Quartus a brother.** R.V., "the brother." Of this man we have no other mention in N.T. He is probably mentioned here not as an intimate friend of the Apostle Paul's, but as one well known to those whom he addresses.

24. This verse, which in A.V. is repeated from ver. 20, is omitted in R.V., with the explanation above referred to.

Rom. xvi. 25–27.

8. THE DOXOLOGY.

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to

the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since
26 the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the
Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment
of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the
26 obedience of faith: to God only wise, be glory through
Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

On the difficulties regarding the history of this doxology see the Introduction. As it stands, it takes the place of the usual benediction with which the Apostle ends his letters. That benediction is here given (R.V.) at ver. 20. The doxologies in the writings of St. Paul occur rarely, and as a rule are brief (cf. Rom. i. 25, ix. 5, xi. 36; Phil. iv. 20; Eph. iii. 20, 21). The last-named is the longest, except the one before us, and resembles it more than any of the others. This passage is remarkable for its difference in style from anything else in the Pauline epistles. It is true, however, that almost all the words in it occur already in the Epistle to the Romans, and its ideas are of course present throughout the preceding chapters. Hence, if we believe that he prepared this as a special and unusually elaborate conclusion to what he felt to be an epistle of unusual importance, we must imagine him going over the main course of his argument, gathering up its significance in his mind, and then concentrating that survey in this act of prayer. There are three main thoughts expressed through its clauses, packed with meaning: (1) The power of God, through the gospel which he preaches, over human lives; (2) the glorious origin and authority of that gospel as God has given it to mankind; (3) the glory of God from whose wisdom it has been given.

25. **Now to him that is of power.** R.V., "that is able." In i. 11 the Apostle expresses his intense desire to impart to the Roman Christians some spiritual gift that they "may be established." He here states his recognition of the fact that God alone can do that work directly—the work, namely, of establishing the souls of men. On God's power cf. xiv. 4; Eph. iii. 20; 2 Tim. i. 12. **to stablish you.** This is a strong and not common word, meaning to place or set firmly in position. It is used six times by the Apostle Paul (cf. Luke ix. 51, xxii. 32; Acts xviii. 23; 1 Thess. iii. 2, 13). In two passages (2 Thess. ii. 17, iii. 3) the Apostle speaks of God establishing believers. **according to my gospel** (cf. ii. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 8). The Apostle felt that the gospel as he preached it was given to him by God (the Epistle to the Galatians was indeed written to prove this). But it was his in an emphatic way because he had been compelled to defend it even against the other apostolic authorities, who had not fully grasped the freeness and universality of God's grace (Gal. ii. 1–21). **and the preaching of Jesus Christ.** The centre of this gospel was Jesus Christ, and there was no other way of making Him known as the object of faith and the channel of righteousness except through preaching. Christ and His gospel are, as it were, one fact wheresoever there is true preaching. **according to the revelation of the mystery.** This and the following clauses set forth the origin and authority of that gospel and the preaching of it. On the word "mystery" cf. xi. 25, and see notes in Commentary on Eph. i. 9, etc., and Col. i. 26, etc. In those Epistles this is a ruling idea. Evidently

the discussions at Ephesus had fastened the Apostle's attention upon it, for the word was much used among certain non-Christian thinkers. But for him a mystery is not, as for them, merely a hidden or supersensuous fact or experience to be reached only through mystic discipline by a few rare spirits. Its correlative terms in Paul's thought are either "revelation" or "Christ in you." The supreme relations with God are established through the indwelling Christ, and are open to all men. Here it is the latter idea, the breadth of the revelation, which is in the foreground. **which was kept secret since the world began.** R.V., "which had been kept in silence through times eternal." Here another word, "silence," is used which had an important place in some phases of non-Christian thought, and was employed even by some early Christian writers as a name for God. Beyond the pale of revelation it naturally seemed to be an appropriate name for the Author of all, who had never disclosed Himself. That silence has been broken. The mystery has become a revelation. Dr. Lake's argument that the word is anti-Pauline because Paul believed that God had spoken in O.T. is not conclusive. The same objection would apply to the words "faith is come" (Gal. iii. 24 after iii. 6).

26. **but now is made manifest.** R.V., "but now is manifested." Cf. iii. 21. **and by the scriptures and the prophets . . . made known.** The revelation was indeed made in Christ, but, as we have seen so often, the Apostle takes the O.T. scriptures as of Divine authority. But he has changed the meaning of that authority for all Christians because he regards them as rightly

interpreted only through and in relation to Christ and the gospel. For him they are all prophetic writings; even the law had a forward look in the purpose of God, as he has proved in this Epistle. **according to the commandment,** etc. No one would dare to deliver a message so new and astounding unless he was sure that in doing so he obeyed a direct commandment of the eternal God. **to all nations for the obedience of faith.** R.V., "unto all nations unto obedience of faith." Again there is a reminiscence of important teachings in the Epistle, according to which the gospel is for Jew and Gentile alike, and according to which faith has become the fundamental law of man's relationship with God, which if a man obey not he defies God Himself.

27. **to God only wise.** R.V. "to the only wise God." The Apostle returns now to fill out the pronoun in the opening words of this doxology —"now unto Him." Throughout he has been moving up to this ascription of worship. He insists here on his monotheism, for He is the only God. And only one as wise as God (xi. 33) can account for the whole course of history which has culminated in Christ, and through Christ will culminate in the final salvation of men. **be glory through Jesus Christ for ever.** R.V., "Through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever;" *margin*, "Some ancient authorities omit 'to whom.'" R.V. gives the true text, though grammatically the more difficult. We have here another instance of the way in which, for the mind of Paul, the name of Christ and the name of God were continually associated as the objects of one supreme faith and the united possessors of the one

supreme glory. The last clause, "to whom be the glory for ever," probably fell from his lips as a familiar form (Gal. i. 5; 1 Tim. iv. 18), as if his feelings prevented him, having named God and Christ, from making any distinction in relation to the glory which he ascribes. Grammar breaks that adoration may have its way.

INDEX

Abraham, 85, 86, 88, 89, 91, 93, 94, 101, 103, 113, 117, 139, 152, 186–199 (*passim*), 265.
Adam, 208 ff.
Adeney, W. F. (*Commentary on Galatians*), 14.
Agabus, 67.
Allegory, 115.
Amplias, 366.
Anathema, 58 f.
Andronicus, 365.
Antioch (in Syria), 12, 22 ff., 30, 53, 67, 69, 73, 122.
Apelles, 367.
Arabia, 21, 61, 63, 64, 115.
Aristobulus, 367.
Arnold, Matthew, 60.
Augustine, St., 326.

Bacon, Benj. W. (*Commentary on Galatians*), 15 f., 25.
Barnabas, 12, 19, 22, 23, 24, 26, 32, 52, 67, 73, 77.

Cenchrea, 361 f.
Church, 360 f.
Coleridge, Samuel T., 37.
Corinth, 14.

Damascus, 61, 62, 63, 64.
Davidson, A. B., 152.
Denney, James (*Expositor's Greek Bible — Romans*), 222, 294, 339, 365.
Dods, Marcus, 29.
Domitilla, 366.

Elijah, 290.
Epenetus, 365.
Ephesus, 12, 42, 363, 370, 377.
Erastus, 375.
Eve, 230.

Gaius, 12, 375.
Galatia, identification and history of, 3–10.
  Paul's visits to, 10–13.
Glover, T. R. 159.
Gnostics, 232, 256.

Habakkuk, 89.
Hagar, 113 ff.
Hastings' *D.B.*, 61, 115.
Hebrews (Ep. to) and Romans, 36.
Hermas, 369.
Herodion, 367.
Horace, 367.

Hort, F. J. A. (*The Christian Ecclesia*), 66.

Illyricum, 351.
Isaac and Esau, 264 ff.
Isaiah, 286.
"Israelites," 260, 286, 298 f.

James (Ep. of) and Romans, 37.
James (the Lord's brother), 27, 31, 32, 52, 65, 71.
Jerusalem, 112, 116 f.; Paul's visits to, 17–28, 64–66, 66–72, 353–360.
Jessica, 365.
John Mark, 11, 368.
Jowett, Benjamin (Commentary on *Galatians*, *Romans*, *etc.*), 67, 129, 281, 306.
Judaizers, 55.
Jude (Ep. of) and Romans, 36.
Julia, 369.
Junia, 365.

Lake, Dr. Kirsopp (*The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*), 16, 17, 28, 40 ff., 378.
Letters, ancient and modern, 50 f.
Libertines, 34.
Lightfoot (*Commentary on Galatians*, *Notes on Romans*, *etc.*), 5, 14, 40, 42, 56, 63, 80, 83, 97, 186, 307.
Luke, 5, 6, 7, 12, 17–27 (*passim*), 62, 65.
Lycaonia, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Macedonia, 355 f.
Marcion, 38 f., 40.
Mary, 365.
Meyer, 134.
Mosaic Law, 60, 132, 138, 210.
Moses, 267 f., 280, 285, 293.

Narcissus, 367.

Paul the Apostle, 8, 11, 52 ff.
Patrobas, 369.
Peter (1st Ep.) and Romans, 36.
Peter, 27, 30, 32, 34, 35, 65, 71, 73–80 (*passim*), 277.
Pharaoh, 267 f., 291.
Phebe, 361 f.
Phrygia, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9.
Polycarp, 116.
Prisca and Aquila, 41, 42, 363 f.

Quartus, 375.

Rabbinism, 93, 112.
Ramsay, Sir W. (*Historical Commentary on Galatians*, *etc.*), 2, 6, 7, 10, 11, 65, 67, 72, 81, 87, 92, 101, 103, 109, 127.
Rebecca, 264 ff.
Rome, 33–35, 37, 38, 40, 44, 45, 46, 142, 147, 294, 358 f., 363 ff.
Rufus, 368.

Sanday and Headlam (*International Commentary on Romans*), 146, 171, 176, 189, 202, 212, 219, 223, 226, 246, 277, 322.
Sarah, 113 ff., 194, 195, 265.
Spain, 353 ff.
Stachys, 367.
Stephen, 34.

Tacitus, 159.
Tarsus, 65.

Tertius, 374.
Thessalonian Epp., 14, 15, 20.
Timothy, 12, 31, 69, 374.
Titus, 23, 67, 68, 69.
Tryphena, Tryphosa, 368.

Urbane, 366.

Weizsäcker (*Apostolic Age*), 176.
Winer, 201.

Zahn, Theodore (*Handkommentar z. N.T.—Galaterbrief*), 56, 68.

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